LAST CHANCE: WIN AN ASTON DB7 PAGE 25

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Testing the V10 monster now on sale
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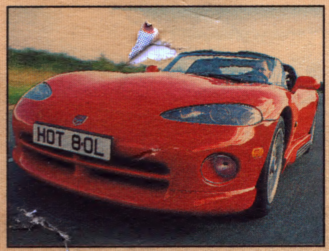

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First drive of striking new coupé
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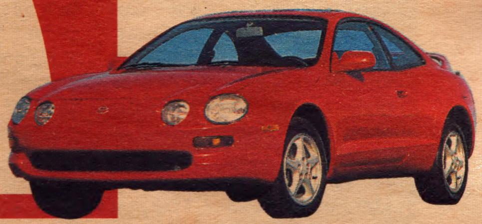
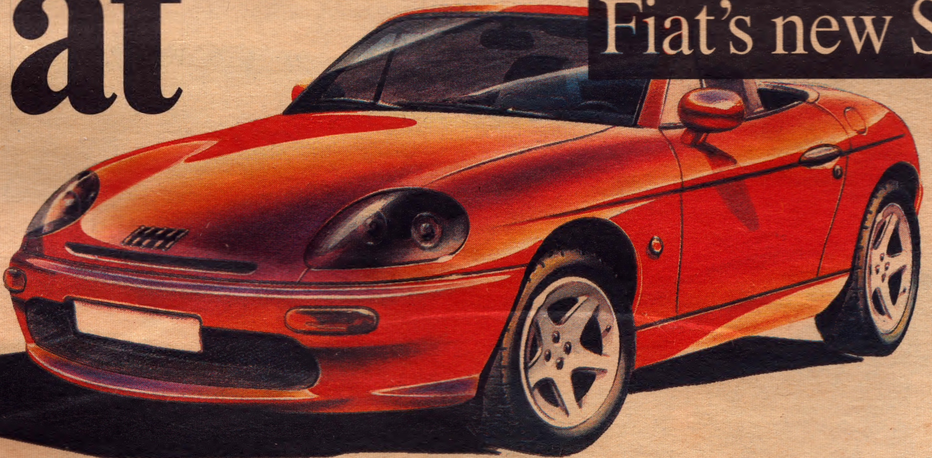


New Ferrari Barchetta

The secret new cars you won't see at the Show

New Ford people-carrier



Fiat's new Spider

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London calling

The London Motor Show – the capital's first truly international show since 1976 – opens at Earls Court on Thursday 21 October. It looks like being the best Earls Court show for years. *Carweek* carries the official guide to the Show this week. We're also giving away 25 tickets to the Show: simply write to London Motor Show competition, *Carweek*, 34 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AV. The first 25 applications that we receive will win a free ticket.

Important new cars making their British debut include:

- **The new AC Ace**
- **Aston Martin DB7 (see page 25, and you might be an early owner)**
- **The revolutionary Audi ASF aluminium concept car**
- **BMW 840Ci**
- **Fiat Punto**
- **Ford Probe (spiritual successor to the Capri)**
- **The relaunch of the Lotus Elan**
- **Mazda Xedos 9**
- **Mercedes-Benz C-class**
- **New Morgan 4/4 1800; all models: four-pot caliper discs**
- **New Porsche 911**
- **New Peugeot 306 Cabriolet, S16 and XSi models**
- **Reliant Scimitar Sabre**
- **Renault Clio Williams, new 134mph hot hatch**
- **A new off-roader called the Rocsta from Korea**
- **New Saab 900**
- **Suzuki Cappuccino**
- **TVR Cerbera, the Blackpool maker's new four-seater**
- **Toyota's Lexus GS300**
- **Vauxhall's Tigra**
- **Volkswagen Golf Estate and revised Passat**

London Motor Show, Earls Court, 21-31 October. Nearest tubes: Earls Court and West Brompton. Nearest BR stations: Paddington and Victoria. Buses: Numbers 31, 74, C1 and C3. There are 1800 reserved car parking spots, at £1.50 per hour, £10 per day or £15 overnight. To book call: 071-370 8390.

Opening hours: 9.30am-7.30pm, except on Oct 26, 27 and 28 (9.30am-9.00pm) and Sun 31 (9.30am-6.00pm)

Prices on the door: 21 October (£12), Rest of the show £7.50 adults, £4 under 14s and OAPs. After 5pm £5 adults, £4 under 14s and OAPs.

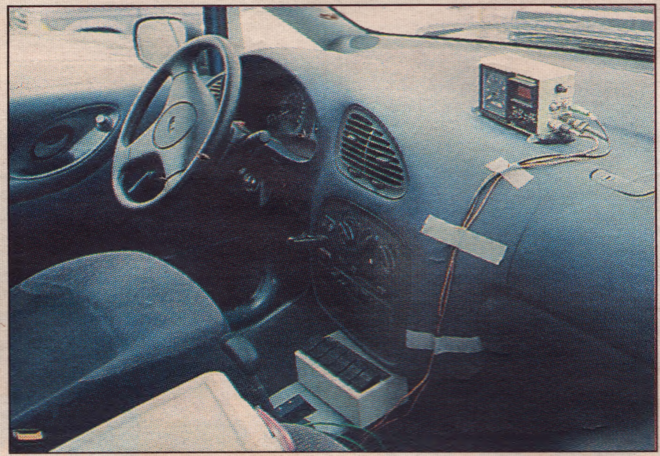
NEXT WEEK – We go behind the scenes as TVR races to finish its new Cerbera (above) for Earls Court. PLUS our verdicts on all the show's new cars, AND win another 25 show tickets

■ People-carrier on Mondeo platform ■ Built in Portugal with

Ford's MPV

HANS LEHMANN

Ford and VW versions of MPV will use same body, but own mechanicals



Seven seater interior will have scalloped dashboard and ventilation outlet

Ford's forthcoming MPV launches against the Renault Espace and Toyota

By Georg Kacher

FORD will enter the booming people-carrier market early in 1995, when it launches this Portuguese-built vehicle, co-developed with Volkswagen.

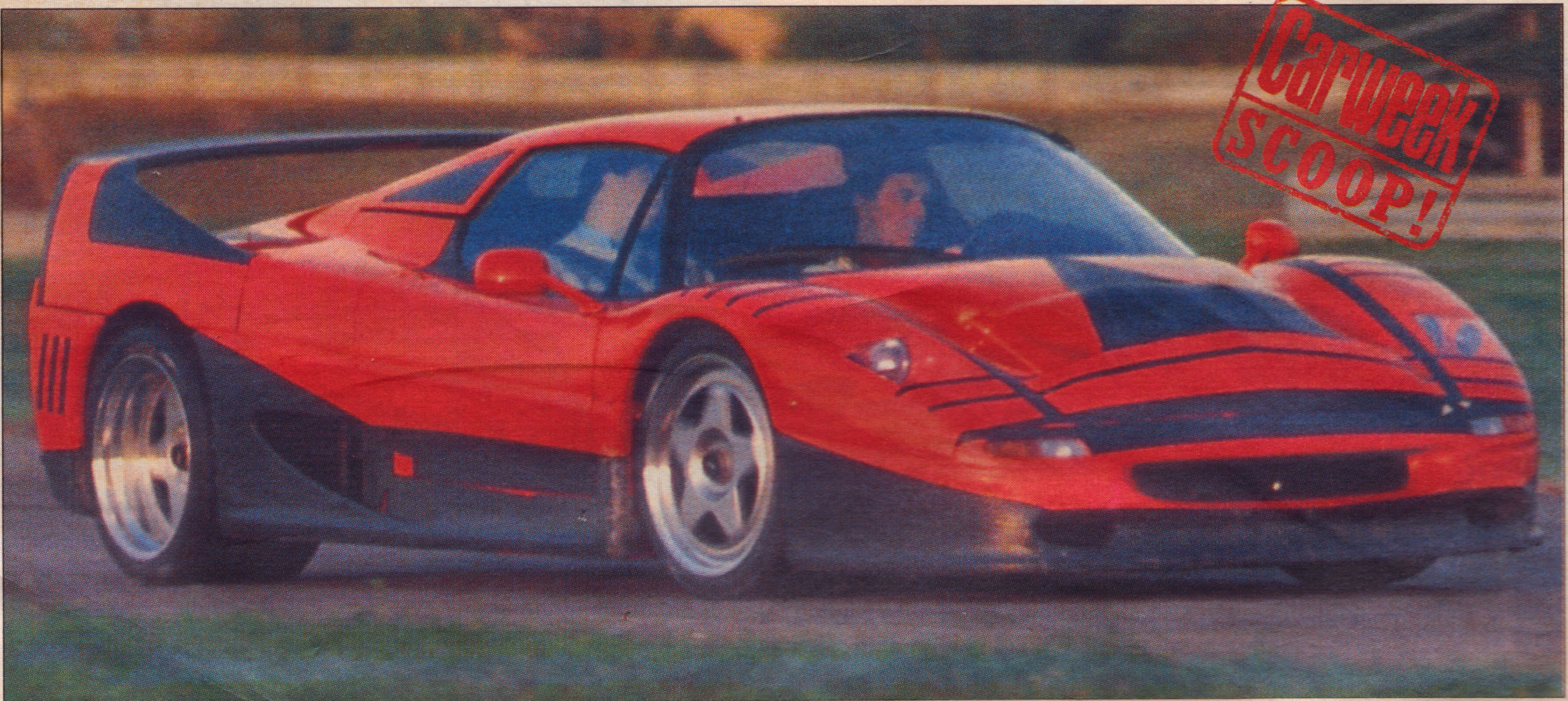
These photos of the Ford version of the vehicle, codenamed VX62, show an undisguised car, apart from some black tape around the front badge and tail. The Ford badge at the front sits in the middle of a large oval grille, rather as it does in the latest 'goldfish mouth' Escort. The rear tape also obscures the fact that the rear light cluster runs full width across the tail.

Cleanly styled and handsome, though in a somewhat anonymous way, the new Ford uses the floorpan and suspension of the Mondeo. It's a seven seater, with three seats in the middle which, like those in the rear, can be folded away to improve luggage space.

Unlike most Japanese people-carriers, the Ford will not use sliding side doors. It has four conventional side doors, and a hatch-like fifth.

The Ford version of project VX62 will use a Mondeo 2.0-litre petrol motor for the standard model. The turbodiesel, as launched recently in the Mondeo, is also on its way.

ARCHIVIO PERINI



The new Ferrari F130 Barchetta, set to replace the legendary F40 next year, is powered by a 4.5-litre V12 with an incredible five-valves per cylinder, and uses a carbon-fibre monocoque

Ferrari

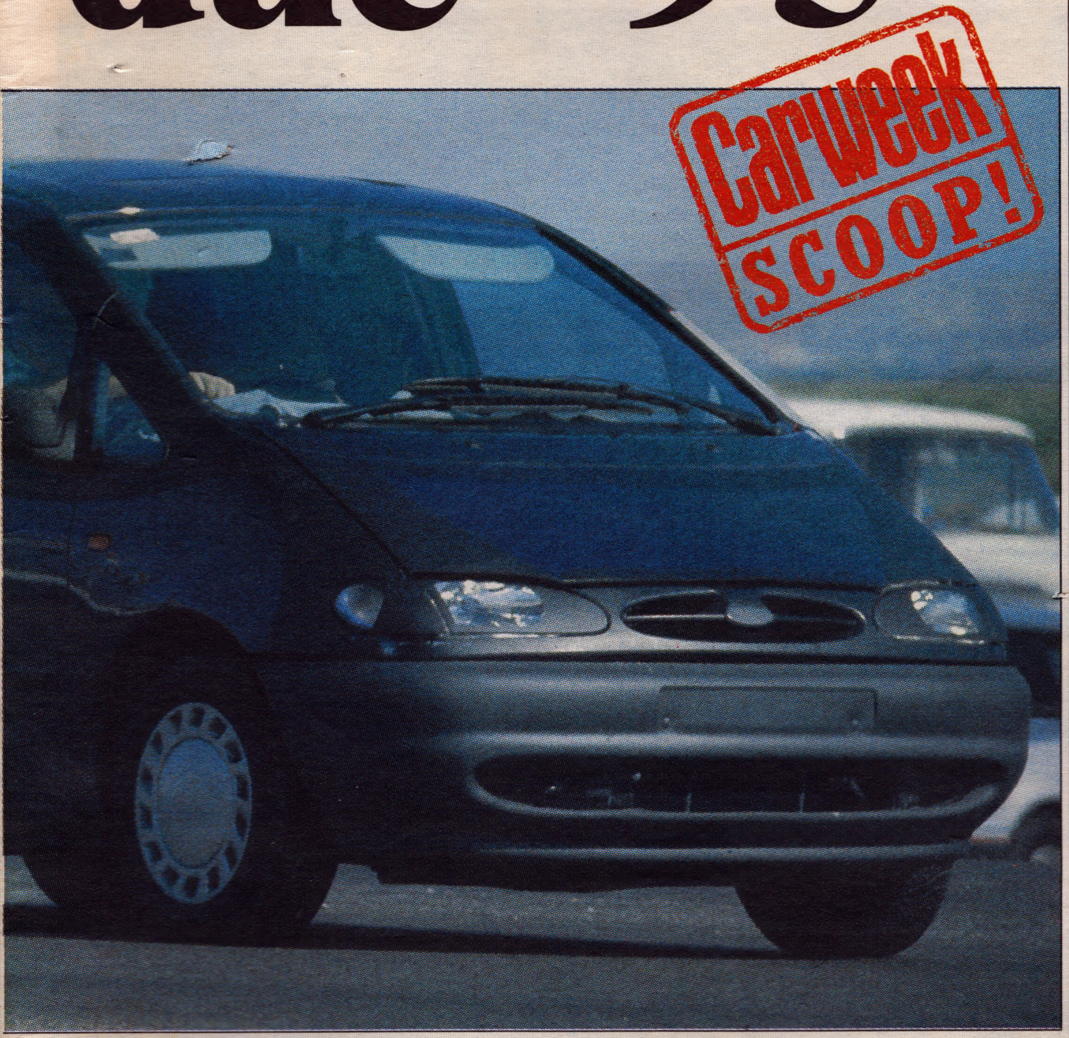
By Giancarlo Perini
In Turin

THIS SPECTACULAR Ferrari F40 replacement, codenamed F130, is almost certain to be the most exciting new car of 1994. The new Barchetta houses a 4.5-litre 60-valve V12 producing 500bhp, which is connected to an in-line gearbox behind the driver. It is fitted with racing car-style wishbone suspension and should provide Ferrari fanatics with the closest approximation yet to a Formula One car.

It is due to make its debut at the Geneva, Paris or Turin shows next spring or autumn. The carbonfibre monocoque body incorporates a detachable roof, allowing it to become a real cabrio, Barchetta-style. The monocoque has been designed by Ferrari Engineering, and by using compos-

Volkswagen ■ VW version will include VR6

due '95



Previa. It has an Escort-like goldfish mouth grille, rounded haunches and conventional rather than sliding doors

VW's version, although identically styled (apart from the badges), will use VW engines. They'll include the base 115bhp 2.0-litre petrol, a turbodiesel and, probably, the VR6 unit, as used in the Golf and Passat.

Production of VX62 starts at the end of next year in the new Portuguese plant co-owned by VW and Ford, at Setubal. Production will start at about 100,000 vehicles a year, eventually rising to 150,000.

VX62 represents a late entry into the burgeoning people-carrier market by Ford and Volkswagen. Renault, Nissan and Toyota are already well-established in the sector, and Fiat and Peugeot launch their jointly developed vehicle – codenamed U60 – next year.

Chrysler, growing quickly in Europe – particularly in Continental markets – is about to launch the revamped Voyager on this side of the Atlantic, before unveiling a brand new vehicle in 1995.

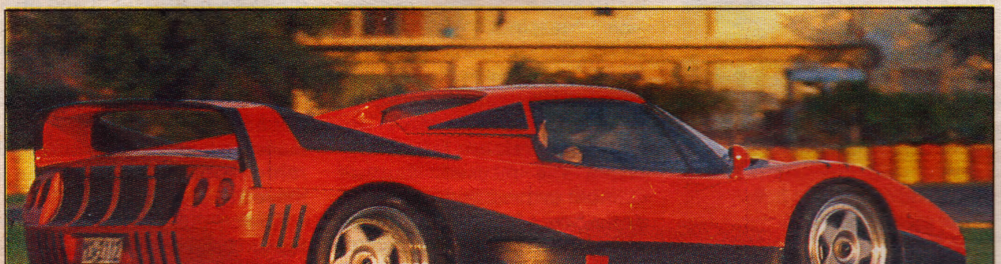
offers flavour of F1

ite materials for body panels, the car is rumoured to weigh no more than 970kg.

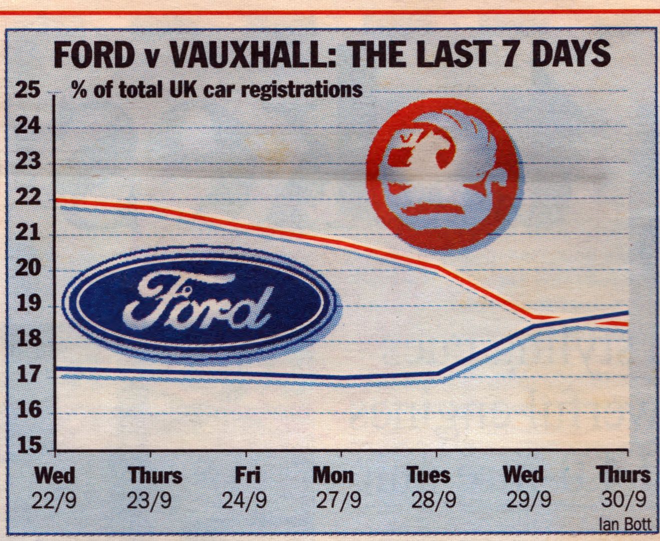
Production may not begin until 1995, and although prices are not yet known, it could cost up to £300,000. It is safe to assume the F130 will be shod with 18-inch wheels, and with a long sixth gear should be able to achieve a top speed not too far short of 220mph, which is genuine Formula One territory.

Ferrai's engineers are looking at a pushbutton gearchange like that on F1 cars, and if this is developed, it would be the first such system to be employed on a road-going car.

However, they are also considering fitting sequential gearboxes, or a clutchless system like that of the new Mondial, or a conventional gearbox.



Rear three-quarter view of Barchetta shows side air ducting, and the car's relatively far forward cabin position



Ford 'fakes' sales

FORD has again prevented its fiercest rival, Vauxhall, from inheriting the number one slot in the UK sales charts – this time by mysteriously 'selling' over 4000 cars on a single day at the end of September.

On every one of the first 29 days of the month, Vauxhall had a significantly higher share of the market than its arch enemy. But thanks to Ford's unexpected late surge, Vauxhall has had the official number one slot stolen from it again.

Unofficially, however, it is widely recognised that Vauxhall often takes over from Ford at the top. Dealers and competitors have accused Ford of distorting the market and sending out misleading economic signals.

Although the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders says that sales last month were up 11.7 percent on September 1992, at 136,100, 'false' registering by Ford and other manufacturers such as Toyota, Renault and Citroën could be largely responsible for the rise.

Apart from outselling Vauxhall by 437 cars (half a percent) in September, Ford also put the Mondeo top of the best-sellers list by the narrowest of margins – the car outsold the Vauxhall Astra by 354 units.

Industry sources say the amount of false registering last month was rife because manufacturers wanted to go into this month's motor show with good sales figures under their belts.

Low-key styling of Nissan Sylvia means it may be marketed as grand tourer

Nissan's next coupé

THIS is the new Nissan Sylvia, which will replace the 200 SX in the UK in a year's time. The most exciting variant – the 2.0-litre turbo, giving 220bhp at 6000rpm – will be the UK's sole engine, probably powering a hatchback. Sources say the new car's rear-drive chassis is better adapted to cope with a powerful engine, improving the handling. Peak torque arrives a full 800rpm lower than the 200SX's, at 4000rpm.

The car will probably be marketed as a grand tourer because of its restrained styling.

Servicing rip-off

SERVICE garages across the UK are exploiting motorists by employing poorly trained mechanics, overcharging for simple repairs, and providing shoddy standards of workmanship.

The findings of a Consumers' Association (CA) survey show most garage servicing leaves cars with a catalogue of faults – only two garages out of 36 tested came up to scratch when a selection of Fords, Vauxhalls and Rovers were taken in anonymously for a service.

Of the 36 garages and car dealerships, 15 failed to spot blown bulbs and 13 missed a loose wheel nut. Only 10 ensured tyres were inflated to the recommended pressure, two fitted brake pads without the owner's permission, and two recommended repairs to solve a lock problem when all that was needed was for a child-lock to be turned off.

'The standard of garage servicing is disappointingly low,' said Paul Kitchen, senior editor of *Which?*, the journal of the CA. 'Many garages are continuing to exploit motorists' inability to check work.

'Motorists expect trained mechanics to be right – our evidence shows that the expectation is ill-founded.'

Before each service, an engineer inspected the car for the CA, marked any items that needed changing, and recorded fluid levels and tyre pressures. Additionally, he made one light on each car inoperative, slackened the fan belt, turned on a rear child-lock and loosened a wheel nut.

Carweek

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Jag takes old curves

Carweek SCOOP!

- Return to old styling cues
- Choice of powerful engines
- Supercharged 4.0-litre unit

By Hilton Holloway

THESE ARE the best scoop shots yet of next autumn's XJ6 and XJ12 replacement. The car is only minimally disguised and was shot near Jaguar's engineering centre in Coventry.

The new car will be launched at the 1994 Birmingham Motor Show; it will have revised styling and tweaked engines, but the floorpan, centre section, doors and the main cabin architecture will remain unchanged.

As can be clearly seen in these photographs, Jaguar's stylists have drawn inspiration from the original XJ6 whose elegant curves are now back in fashion. Codenamed X300, the car has new wings, a new bonnet, a more compact chrome grille and a one-piece front bumper.

Under the bonnet, customers will have a choice of four engines: the current 3.2 and 4.0-litre 6-cylinder units, a supercharged 4.0-litre, and a 6.0-litre V12. Both 6-cylinder engines will be tweaked to give greater power. Supercharging the 4.0-litre unit is a stop-gap in two ways. First, it plugs the power gap between the plain 4.0-litre and the 318bhp V12, and secondly, it holds the fort until the arrival of Jaguar's new V8 - codenamed AJ26 – in 1996.

Despite encouraging worldwide sales for Jaguar, Ford was recently forced to inject another £300m into the Coventry-based firm in the face of continuing losses. Research and development for new models, including X300, rose to £66.2m last year from £54m in 1991.

Small round headlights run back into the new curvaceous bonnet, making the nose of the car very reminiscent of the old XJ6. At the rear, the wings are unchanged, but the edge of the boot lid has been given a distinctive lip, and is now higher than the wings. This clever high-tail tweak, combined with the new triangular rear light clusters, again inspired by the old XJ6, should give a sense of additional muscularity to the rear of the car. Other external improvements will include two new styles of alloy wheels, both seen on these mule cars.

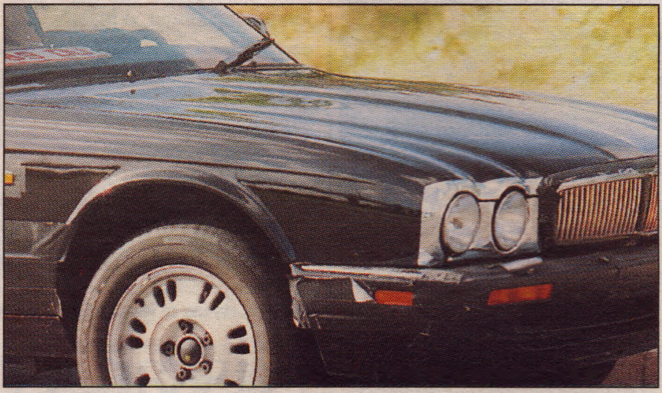
The 4.0-litre V8 will be built at Ford's Bridgend factory. Jaguar sources say the engine will deliver 300bhp and return excellent fuel economy. The engine will be fitted into this X300 a few months after it debuts in the new XJS (codenamed X100).

By 1998, a version of Ford US's new modular V6 will replace the straight sixes under the bonnet of the car pictured here.

The styling changes, revamped interior and engine improvements will have to be very convincing. Jaguar is pinning its hopes on a car that was born in 1986, and will have to last until at least the end of the century.

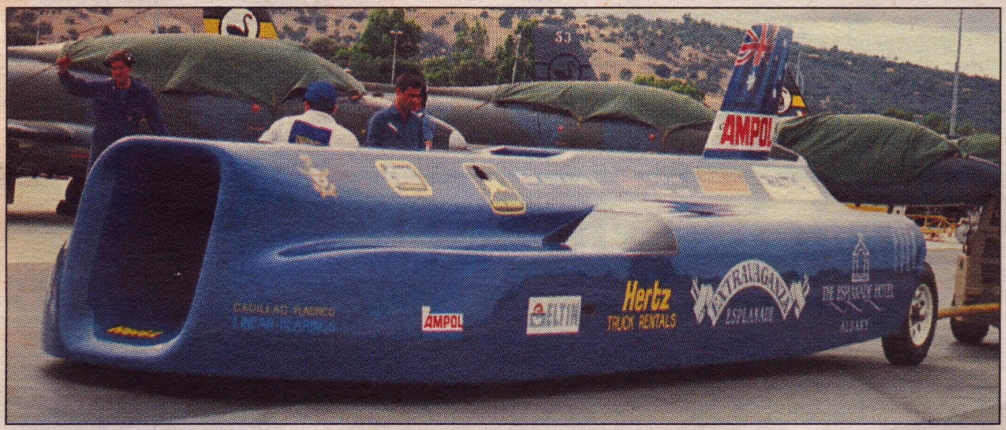
DREW GARDNER

Replacement for XJ6 and XJ12 seen testing near Coventry; left-hooker features new alloy wheels, twin headlights and rounded wing contours



Silver foil and black tape disguise revisions to lights, grille and bumper

Boot lid trailing edge gets a lip to help tweak the Jag's rear-end styling



Aussie Invader, the 30,000hp Mirage-engined rocket car challenging Noble's 633mph Land Speed Record

Rosco McGlashan: grateful driver

Noble lends a hand in record attempt

By Greg Milner

AUSTRALIAN Rosco McGlashan plans to break the world land speed record – with the help of Britain's current holder, Richard Noble.

Noble is providing technical advice for McGlashan's attempt to crack the 633mph record with the jet-powered car, known as Aussie Invader. And McGlashan acknowledges a big debt to Noble and his engineer John Ackroyd.

'I can't tell you how grateful I am to those guys,' he said.

'The whole time we've been working on this, all I've had to do is phone Richard with a problem and the fax will be going all night with specifications or weather details. Richard's just a helluva man.'

On November 3, at Lake Gairdner, South Australia, McGlashan will attempt to beat Donald Campbell's Australian speed record of 403mph, set in 1964. Then early next year, he will try for the big one: to lift Noble's world record to 700mph.

Asked about his involvement, Noble said: 'It's because records are there to be broken. Unlike other forms of motor sport, this business is not competitive. Everybody is there to help.'

The ex-Australian air force Mirage jet engine in Aussie Invader delivers the equivalent of 30,000 horsepower, sufficent to power a navy frigate.

The car will accelerate faster than Concorde, rushing from a standstill to record speed and back in about 60 seconds.

Not-so happy clampers foiled

WHEEL clampers demanded a victim's leather jacket and gold rings, worth £1000, to keep as security until she paid their £50 fine. But the arch-enemies of the urban motorist were outwitted by Lancashire law student Sharon Le Masson, who hauled her car away and sheared off the huge clamps.

Last March, 33-year-old Mrs Le Masson parked her VW Golf in a private car park, and five minutes later National Clamps pounced. The 'operative' demanded a release fee of £50. When she refused, another clamper arrived from their Preston office. Mrs Le Masson then says the two clampers asked for her jacket and six gold rings which would be returned if she paid up within two weeks.

When she refused this, the men said they were going to send for a tow truck, so they could impound the car, and would charge her £80 for the call-out, £80 a day for storage, plus the original £50. Mrs Le Masson refused to give in.

'I jumped in the car,' she said. 'That resulted in an animated discussion about kidnapping, so they stood off.' Eventually, she decided to go home, fitting her own lock to the clutch and gear lever. The clampers then retaliated with bigger wheel clamps and a steel chain.

Mrs Le Masson then played her ace card; she hired a low-loader to take the car home and rented an angle grinder to remove the wheel clamps.

'The cost was a fiver less than the fee,' she said. 'But the pleasure was in outsmarting the clampers.'

National Clamps says it has tried to have Mrs Le Masson prosecuted, but Lancashire Police say it is a civil matter and they do not want to be involved.

DOMINIC FRASER

With a heritage going back to 1931, the Ace is back with an all-new, hand-made, corrosion-proof body; styling is reminiscent of certain Astons

■ IAD-styled hand-built body

■ 5.0-litre V8 Cobra power

Ace could be AC's trump card

ONE OF the most famous British sports car names will make a sensational return at next week's London Motor Show. Absent since 1961, the AC Ace is to go on sale this month, for around £50,000. It is pitched as a credible alternative to such cars as the Mercedes 500SL.

The new Ace is powered by a massive 5.0-litre 260bhp V8 Ford, also used in the AC Cobra retro-roadster. It is designed to allow easy updates, and has been engineered to accept a number of different power-plants. It will be fitted with either a four-speed automatic or five-speed manual transmission.

The first 25 cars will be built to order in-house at AC Cars, and will cost less than £50,000. After that they will be sold through dealers at around £56,000.

Styled initially by the British firm IAD, and tweaked in-house by AC, the twin-cowled head-lights and small 'egg-box' grille resemble the Aston Martin DB7. The bucked tail and rear lights hint at the Aston Virage.

AC is keen to compare the Ace with such exotica as the Aston Martin Virage Volante convertible, Mercedes 500SL and Jaguar V12 XJS convertible. On paper it looks good, the cheapest and fastest of the four (claimed 0-60mph time is 5.9sec and top speed is 140mph). It lacks such luxuries as cruise control and electric seats, but has an electrically powered soft-top.

The body is a lightweight monocoque tub made from 'chromweld' plate which has the corrosion-proof properties of stainless steel, but is as easy to fabricate as mild steel. The chassis uses 'sacrificial arms', similar to crumple zones, up front to absorb impacts. Subframes carry the double wishbone and coil suspension front and rear, and hand-beaten aluminium panels form the bodywork.

The rear of the Ace cuts a tidy figure out on the Brooklands banking

Beautifully proportioned, the Ace's body uses hand-beaten aluminium

Ford appoints Briton chief

Alex Trotman: Dagenham starter

A MIDDLESEX-BORN man whose career began back in 1955 as a trainee parts-purchaser at Dagenham will soon become the first Briton to head Ford's world-wide empire.

Alex Trotman, 60, who replaces 67-year-old Harold Poling as Chairman at the end of the year, moved quickly through the senior ranks of Ford in the US after leaving his job as chairman of Ford Europe in the 1980s. The appointment is a major coup for Trotman, who becomes one of the most important business figures in the world. Much of his career at Ford has been spent in product planning, although he has held senior positions in the US, Europe and Asia.

The former RAF officer is now an American citizen, which qualifies him to take the top job at Ford, once occupied by Henry Ford. The first foreign-born executive to run the company, Trotman is said to have the personal backing of Ford family members, including the patriarch William Clay Ford.

Trotman, whose succession has been widely rumoured over the last few months, edged out financial doyen Allan Gilmour for the top job. Mr Gilmour stays on as vice-chairman. Trotman was once Lee Iacocca's chief lieutenant at Ford HQ in Dearborn, and managed to avoid the bloodshed when Mr Iacocca was fired in 1978.

ROYAL TO FLOG OLD JAM-JARS

REX FEATURES

Notorious blue-blooded rule-breaker Jamie Blandford, heir to Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire, has taken up car dealing, according to reports from rarefied society circles. Our Jamie is understood to have shifted an E-Type Jaguar, an Aston Martin and several other desirable cars in recent months.

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE SUNNY

The next Sunny GTi will be out in early autumn next year, to be followed by a world rally championship rubber burner in mid-1995. The car will probably have a 160bhp 2.0-litre engine. The current GTI-R has many fans in Japan – so enthusiasts are already fretting about losing it.

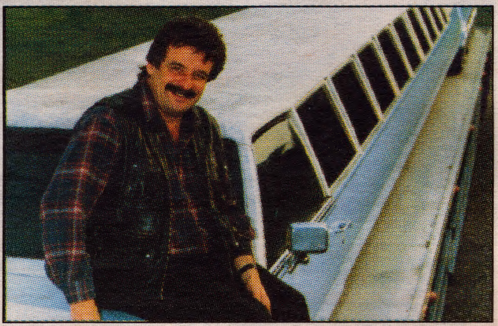
THE NEARLY NAKED CIVIL SERVANT

Just when you thought the motor industry had put female flesh as a marketing tool behind it, along comes last week's photocall for a 'Classic' collection of number plates – with ex-Page 3 model Linda Lusardi clambering all over a Ferrari. More surprising, the DoT organised the stunt through the DVLA.

DROP-TOP 4X4 SUZUKI SWIFT MOOTED

Suzuki is rumoured to be looking at building a two-seater convertible 4x4 version of the Swift in an attempt to open a new niche in Japan. A show car version is likely to be unveiled in Tokyo in late-September.

SO WHERE'S THE SWIMMING POOL GONE?



Gerry Cottle's outrageous Cadillac limo – thought to be the longest car in the world – goes under the hammer this weekend at Sotheby's Historic and Classic sale at the RAF Museum in Hendon. At 70 feet long, the 18-wheel gin-palace is fitted with three telephones, a fridge, television, video, jacuzzi and those most essential of auto luxury options, water fountains.

£2000 FOR A 1/8 SCALE MODEL BENTLEY

Model-maker SMTS has produced four Bentley Continental R coupés to 1/8 scale. The cars, hand-built to order for Rolls-Royce, are made from resin and glassfibre with brass fittings. 'When owners take delivery of their full-size Bentleys, they also have the option of becoming the proud custodians of exact scale-model replicas,' said SMTS spokesman Keith Williams. At £2000 a throw, however, this option costs £400 more than air conditioning on a BMW 5-series.

Carweek 2

MORE NEWS – SEE THE PINK PAGES

- Insurers may hike premiums for 4wds
- BMW launches 3-yr warranties, drops prices
- Used prices tumble as trade-ins flood auctions
- For more details and news on buying, selling and running cars turn to our free second section.

■ Fiat's stylish MX-5 challenger ■ Debut at Geneva 1995 ■ 136bhp 16v 1.8-litre engine

Incy-wincy spider

Fiat's attractive new convertible sportster signals the marque's welcome return to niche marketing. It will compete with the Mazda MX-5, Rover's forthcoming RV8 and, when it returns to the roads, the Lotus Elan

BY MARK CATTERALL

FIAT'S renaissance as a manufacturer of stylish sports cars will be spearheaded by this gorgeous Spider in spring 1995.

Alongside next year's coupé, the Spider is designed to re-establish Fiat as an imaginative and fashionable marque after the Italian firm all-but abandoned niche vehicles in the 1980s. Along with Rover's forthcoming MG, it will provide Europe with a long-awaited challenger to the Mazda MX-5, which has dominated the small roadster market since 1990.

Fiat UK is hoping that a positive reaction to the Spider and the coupé over here, and in Japan, will convince the Italian management to build right-hand-drive versions.

The front-wheel drive Spider is likely to make its first appearance at the Geneva Show in 1995, nine months after Alfa Romeo's Spider debuts. Power for the Fiat will come from a 16v 136bhp 1.8-litre engine. A 1.6-litre plant producing around 100bhp is also likely.

The two-seater roadster has been designed at Fiat's own design centre, but the car is almost certain to be produced at the old Lancia Chivasso plant by Maggiora. Maggiora has recently bought the rights to the names Touring and Superleggera, raising interesting speculation about the design of the car.

The Spider is not based on the same Tipo platform as the coupé. Rather it uses a derivative of the Punto chassis as developed and reinforced for the Punto Cabriolet.

The use of this chassis means the car will be noticeably smaller and cheaper than next year's Alfa Spider. Sources say the car fits in between the 850 and 124 spiders which Fiat sold with great success in the 1970s.

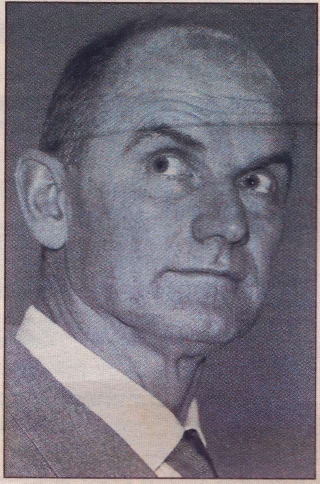
In the 1960s and 1970s, the Fiat Group had more niche cars than any other manufacturer in Europe. Although popular, the cars were not cost-effective, so by the 1980s only the Lancia Delta Integrale and Alfa Spider survived outside the Fiat Group's mainstream models.

Seat turns to Madrid in crisis over enforced cuts

THE SPANISH car maker, Seat, has asked the Madrid government for help in a desperate bid to save its Toledo and Marbella plant in Barcelona. The factory employs around 11,000 workers.

The growing crisis follows parent company Volkswagen's insistence that Seat cut its workforce to help stem losses, which are estimated to be around £500m this year.

Volkswagen's chairman, Ferdinand Piech, has already talked to the Spanish government about the cuts, which could be disastrous for Barcelona's unemployment levels. The plans prompted the resignation two weeks ago of Juan Antonio Diaz Alvarez, chairman of Seat.



Ferdinand Piech: cutting talk

Virtual reality, with an L-plate

A UNIQUE simulator that is claimed to make learning to drive a safer and cheaper experience is being offered to Britain's 10,000 driving instructors.

The Ramar simulator uses a five-speed gearbox and clutch from a real car to allow learners to master a gearchange and foot pedals before they make their first foray onto the roads.

'It's like a car without wheels,' said Derek Ransome, of the Corporation of London's road safety centre, the first training organisation in Britain to use the driving simulator. 'It could reduce accidents when learners get on the road, and accelerate their learning process.'

The simulator could also be useful to driving schools. Wear and tear on their cars would be reduced, and they would save on insurance, says Ray Diggins, of Ramar Engineering, a consultancy in Harlow, Essex.

'We should be able to sell the system for £10,000 if we can find a large enough market. We are also looking into leasing arrangements,' he said.

Driving simulators were popular in Britain in the 1950s and '60s, but their popularity has declined. The Ramar version is unusual among such simulators because it uses a car gearbox and clutch – from a Ford Fiesta – while an electric motor replaces the engine.

Learners operate the controls while matching the car's speed (the Ramar has a speedometer and rev-counter) to a video movie of an urban journey which plays on the screen in front of the trainee driver.

Mr Ransome's department will charge learners a subsidised rate of £20 for six hours on one of its six Ramar machines.

The simulator uses clutch and gearbox from a Fiesta – but no engine

Honda's 86 mpg

HONDA has reinforced its commitment to variable valve technology rather than diesel, following the decision of US President Bill Clinton to launch a research programme into 80mpg cars.

The Japanese firm continues to spurn diesel, saying its own V-TEC units are just as fuel-efficient while delivering much better performance.

To prove a point, a Civic VEi achieved an average of 86mpg over a 3800-mile drive around the British coastline. The drive sets a new record for petrol-engined cars and now appears in the *Guinness Book of Records*.

Developed to improve the combustion process, the Civic's engine takes one of two inlet valves on each cylinder out of action at engine speeds below 2500rpm.

Colour crunch

RUSSIAN Boris Kotzin ordered a new car but had to wait the standard eight years for it to be delivered. After spending another five hours in the factory, he found that the car was the wrong colour. Unfortunately for Mr Kotzin, Russian law says a new car from the factory must be the exact colour as originally ordered – now he has to wait another six months for a respray.

'Comrade Kotzin, your car is ready.'

Anything but Dinky little prices

BRILLIANT copies of valuable model cars are cropping up at collectors' auctions as criminals take advantage of soaring Dinky Toy values. The copies are soldered together from broken bits of original models before being carefully prepared for sale by painting and attaching transfers.

News of the forgeries comes just days after one collector made a staggering £57,000 at auction for his 700 Dinky Toys. Sixty-three-year-old Alan Cooper had been acquiring the boxed models since 1946.

A 1951 Guy van, boxed and in Lyons Swiss Roll livery, which cost the equivalent of 36p years ago, sold for £955, while a rare blue Morris Oxford sold for £2640. Even empty Dinky Toy boxes were making £100.

Mercedes to mix its model range

BY PAUL LIENERT
In Detroit

Due in 1997, the sport-utility will add badly-needed variety to the Mercedes range; will seat five or seven

OVER THE next three years Mercedes-Benz will fill out its C-class range with a compact estate and roadster, add a new entry-level sport-utility and begin production of a four-passenger 'city slicker' based on its recent A93 Vision concept vehicle, says Jürgen Hubbert, head of the passenger-car division.

The sport-utility will be built at a new factory in Vance, Alabama, in southern USA.

'In the 10 years since we introduced the 190, we have had only a four-door sedan,' Mr Hubbert said in an interview at the US launch of the C-class. 'We see that if you want to achieve some very special niches and some bigger volume, we need also some variations of the car. So we will have a [C-class] wagon later, and a small roadster based on the C-class.'

Mr Hubbert says price targets for the roadster and the estate car are 'under $40,000'. The estate is likely to reach the American market as a 1996 model and the roadster as a '97 model.

Speaking of the C-class roadster, Mr Hubbert commented: 'There is a big market of younger people. The SL is in a price range they cannot afford. It [the C-class roadster] is an exciting Q-car [unobtrusive but quick].'

Mr Hubbert says the proposed A-class vehicle [the Vision mini-car] could be in production 'in early 1997' if it receives corporate approval by the end of 1993. Total development time, from management approval to production start-up, will be around 36 months.

Although Mercedes has said it plans, initially, to offer only petrol and diesel versions of the A class, Mr Hubbert said a battery-powered variant is being developed specially for California.

'We must have a zero-emission vehicle when we sell in California,' he said. 'By 1998 two percent of our sales in California have to be zero-emission.'

Apart from having a 2.8-litre six, the upcoming sport-utility will share few components with the C-class. Virtually all parts, except engines, will be sourced in North America.

When it goes on sale in early 1997, the sports-utility, which Mr Hubbert describes as 'slightly smaller' than a Range Rover – will be offered, first, as a long-wheelbase, four-door hardtop.

Mr Hubbert says Mercedes is also working on a sporting short-wheelbase, soft-top variant for the future. It will have full-time 4wd and will be offered with a choice of four, six and eight-cylinder engines. It will be priced from $30,000-$35,000 (£20,500-£23,900).

The Cobra - thought by many to be one of the most exciting sports cars in the UK - is now £32k cheaper

AC's cheap snake

AC CARS is slashing the list price of its Cobra by 32 percent, in one of the largest price cuts in motoring history.

The retro-roadster is now on offer for a mere £68,000, down from £100,000. Brian Angliss, managing director of the Weybridge company, claims that overheads have been considerably reduced since AC moved to its new 90,000 square foot production plant.

AC Cars has also recently amalgamated with AutoKraft Ltd, which means the new Ace (see page 3) and Cobra will be built alongside each other.

This, says Mr Angliss, has produced significant economies and has greatly improved efficiency. However, sources say AC has been unofficially offering substantial 'deals' to many customers over the past few months in anticipation of this cut in list price.

The Cobra has recently received full certification to be sold anywhere in the world, and the dealer networks are now being appointed.

The move comes after a crash in residual Cobra prices. One dealer in a recent Sunday paper advertised an unused and unregistered Mk4 Cobra for just £44,500. A 1988 F-plate Mk 4 with just 4000 miles on the clock, was also on offer for £37,500.

Eventually, says AC, the move will not drastically affect existing Cobra owners, as theirs is an enthusiast market, not one troubled by speculators.

Jags for commie arrivistes

JAGUAR IS planning to sell cars throughout communist China. This unlikely market place has been targeted because of its recent bold economic reforms which have brought considerable wealth to various parts of the country. Jaguar China will be a subsidiary of the international group Inchcape, which has been appointed as distributor.

Nick Scheele, chairman of Jaguar, believes that China will become one of Jaguar's most important markets.

'As with any development market, we will be growing from modest beginnings, but we see tremendous long term potential in there,' he said. 'We expect to sell 40 cars in 1993 rising to over 100 cars next year.'

Jaguar China will form a series of joint dealerships in China, beginning in Peking, Guangzhou and Shanghai, where the first distribution and after-sales service centre will also be sited.

● For scoop shots of Jaguar's XJ replacement, see pages 4/5.

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

TELEVISION

Wednesday 13 Oct
2.00pm, 9.30pm Pharaohs' Rally (Eurosport)
5.00pm NHRA Drag Racing (Sky Sports)
5.30pm Motor World (Sky Sports)

Thursday 14 Oct
10.30am American Motorsport (Sky Sports)
2.00pm Pharaohs' Rally (Eurosport)
8.30pm *Top Gear* (BBC2)
9.30pm Classic Cars (Discovery)

Friday 15 Oct
10.30am Best of British Motorsport (Sky Sports)
8.30pm Honda Motor SPort Report (Eurosport)

Saturday 16 Oct
10.00am, 2.00pm Pharaohs' Rally (Eurosport)

Sunday 17 Oct
8.00pm Touring Cars from Monza (Eurosport)

Monday 18 Oct
Noon Pharaohs' Rally (Eurosport)

MOTOR SPORT

Friday-Saturday 15-16 Oct
BTRA TRUCK FINALS, Pembrey Race Circuit, Dyfed (Adults £5 Sat., £8 Sun., children free; 0554 891042)

Friday-Sunday 15-17 Oct
MULL CAR RALLY, Isle of Mull, Scotland (0704 575597)

Saturday 16 Oct
BRSCC CHAMPIONSHIP CAR RACES, Oulton Park, Cheshire: Ford XRs, Porsche 924s, FF1600 (Adults £7, children free; 0829 760301)

Sunday 17 Oct
HSCC HISTORIC CAR RACES, Snetterton, Norfolk (Adults £7, children free; 0953 87303)

EVENTS

Thursday 14 Oct
ADT ROLLS-ROYCE AUCTION, Brighouse, Yorks (2.00pm, 0484 718555)

Sunday 17 Oct
KENT AUTOJUMBLE, County Showground, nr Maidstone (0246 239264)
AMERICANA MANIA, Picketts Lock Centre, London N9: yankie metal to see and buy (0908 502272)

Teletext

Carweek now supplies ITV's Teletext service with motoring and new car news. Bulletins run from 7pm Friday till midnight Sunday. Turn to page 486 of Teletext on Channel 4

You're looking at one of Citroën's latest diesels. Believe it or not.

And if you don't believe it, how can we blame you?

After all, have you ever seen a diesel with such purposefully streamlined and uncompromising styling? Have you ever seen a diesel with those vital touches such as spoilers, alloy wheels and body-colour painted bumpers?

Well, you have now.

The car's interior, too, is every bit as good looking as the exterior.

CITROËN ZX

VOLCANE

TURBO DIESEL

Sit back, and you'll find yourself enjoying supportive, multi-adjustable sports seats. Reach out and you really will find a leather sports steering wheel and gear shift.

The Volcane Turbo Diesel continues to impress when it has left the showroom.

The unequalled standards of handling and roadholding come courtesy of the ZX's acclaimed self-steering rear axle, while ride comfort is every bit as good as you would expect from Citroën.

The performance, meanwhile, is easily

CAR PICTURED ZX VOLCANE TURBO DIESEL 3 DOOR. *ALL PRICES ARE EX-WORKS AND INCLUDE VAT, BUT EXCLUDE ADDITIONAL ON THE ROAD COSTS OF £484 FOR NUMBER PLATES, DELIVERY AND SIX MONTHS ROAD FUND LICENCE. GOVERNMENT FUEL ECONOMY FIGURES ZX TURBO DIESEL:

sufficient to put many petrol-driven sporting hatchbacks in the shade.

Hardly surprising then, that in a recent 12 hour endurance test monitored by the RAC Motor Sports Association, a ZX Volcane Turbo Diesel set (subject to official ratification), 19 new national diesel performance records.

Of course, the Citroën ZX Volcane Turbo Diesel does have one thing in common with other diesels. Namely, the outstanding fuel consumption figures – 65.7mpg at 56mph to be exact.

CITROËN

And, in order to protect both you and your no claims bonus, it comes with side impact bars and alarm as standard.

Your bank balance is also protected as prices for the Volcane Turbo Diesel begin at just £12,850 for the three-door model, or £13,215 for the five-door.

There's a first time for everything and here for the first time is a diesel with everything.

So phone **0800 262 262** for the name and address of your nearest dealer, and get a new perspective on diesel.

URBAN CYCLE, 39.2MPG; CONSTANT 56MPH, 65.7MPG; CONSTANT 75MPH, 45.6MPG. FOR EXPORT/TAX FREE SALES CONTACT CITROËN, BERKELEY SQUARE. TELEPHONE: 071 629 8818. SOURCE OF INFORMATION: MANUFACTURER. PRICES CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS 29.9.93.

Sleek but meeker

- Euro-spec car due next year
- New slippery aerodynamics
- Suspension fine-tuned

TOYOTA CELICA GT
ENGINE: (US spec) 2164cc, 4cyl, dohc 16v, 135bhp, 145lb ft of torque
PERFORMANCE: Max speed 125mph, 0-60mph 8.7sec
DATE ON SALE: Spring 1994
PRICE: £15,500 in US

The Euro-spec Celica should be significantly more powerful than this US version. It's less rounded than the current car, but the new Celica cuts a cleaner dash through the air.

THINK of it as the Supra's little sister. True, the performance is more moderate, and it drives the front instead of the rear wheels, but the spirit of the new 1994 model Celica is closely related to that of the latest thick-necked supercar from Toyota.

Take, for instance, the shape, which is more purposeful and less curvy than last year's car. The design may not be as striking as that of a Probe or a Calibra, but the Celica MkV is more slippery than ever (0.30 Cd), and its vast boot, which continues to be hampered by a tall loading lip, is now even bigger than that of an Audi 100.

While the folding rear seats are nothing more than token items, neither driver nor passenger could complain about a shortage of leg or shoulder room. Headroom is at a premium though, especially when the optional power sunroof is fitted.

The new Celica has a well-appointed, ergonomically correct and tastefully furnished cabin. The nicest version of the lot is the highline model which comes with leather seats, air con and a clever radio-tape-CD combination stereo system.

All Celicas are fitted with power steering, windows, mirrors and door locks, plus ABS, dual airbags, belt tensioners and door beams. The driving environment is first class. The instrument binnacle is well laid out, the steering wheel tilts at exactly the right angle, the pedals are perfectly spaced and the stubby gearlever falls readily to hand.

Among the few cabin-related drawbacks are the lack of oddments space, the non-adjustable safety belts and headrests, and sub-standard visibility.

For 1994, Toyota has given the Celica a more frugal but larger capacity powerplant. That's the good news. The bad news is that it still has only four cylinders and a relatively modest maximum power output of 135bhp, which compares most unfavourably with the Probe's 163bhp and the Prelude's 160. The data of the Euro-spec model has not yet been finalised, but since last year's 2.0-litre engine developed 156bhp (not to mention the All-Trac's turbocharged 208bhp), the more modern 2.2-litre unit should have a few extra horses in the stable before it reaches this side of the Atlantic. Perhaps Toyota's engineers can take this opportunity to flatten the torque curve which currently peaks at 4400rpm, where 145lb ft are available. Like most Japanese engines, the Celica's 16-valve unit is commendably smooth-running and eager to rev to its 6300rpm cut-out. On the debit side, we noticed an unpleasantly high noise level which goes from boom to roar as you floor the accelerator. It's attached to a quick, slick and well-spaced five-speed transmission, but the 135 horses have to gallop hard to get the 2580lb Celica going.

The US version requires a leisurely 8.7 seconds to accelerate from 0-60mph, and the struggling powerplant runs out of steam disappointingly early, at 125mph.

According to Toyota, the typical fuel consumption varies between 27 and 34mpg. We aver-

Capacious boot holds more luggage than an Audi 100's, though it is difficult to load. Plenty of leg and shoulder room inside too, but headroom is limited by the optional sunroof

'The 16v engine is commendably smooth-running and eager to rev to its 6300rpm cut-out speed'

Celica

Twin-lamped front-end treatment is reminscent of the hot new Supra

aged 25.6mpg, not exceptional in view of the stringent US speed limits. All in all, the new 2.2-litre engine is hardly a revelation. What this car needs is a state-of-the-art V6 providing more bottom-end power, more top-end go and the kind of overall refinement expected of a compact luxury coupé.

The suspension of the new Celica has been fine-tuned in several areas. It now boasts compact front and rear subframes which were intended to keep road and engine noise, as well as vibration and harshness, to a minimum.

The front suspension relies once again on McPherson struts, offset coil springs and an anti-roll bar; in the rear we still find the independent dual-link arrangement comprising twin cross-members, a longitudinal arm, coil springs and low-pressure gas-filled shock absorbers.

The disc brakes are bigger than before, inner-ventilated at the front and equipped with ABS. The tyre size is unchanged at 205/55R15, but the five-spoke alloy wheels have been re-designed for better brake cooling. Also new is the power-assisted rack and pinion steering which features a rotary-type control valve for a quicker yet more progressive action.

Ten percent lighter and 20 percent stiffer, the new Celica is more fun to drive than its predecessor but only marginally so. Despite the uprated suspension, the wider track, the unerring directional stability and the more accurate steering, the car's dynamic qualities are still lacklustre. The handling is failsafe but sadly uninspiring. The roadholding is strong but, in the wet, levels of grip and traction leave a lot to be desired.

'The unrefined chassis is haunted by torque-steer and a noisy, harsh, and jittery ride'

The unrefined chassis is haunted by excessive torque-steer and by an extra-dry ride which borders on the unacceptable (noisy, jittery, harsh) on broken up pavement. Add to this a set of unconvincing brakes and a steering which loses interest the more lock you apply, and it becomes clear that the new Toyota misses the mark by a surprising margin.

The Celica is strangely uninvolving and passive, and its performance can't even approach the Corrado's. If the European spec version is going to stand a chance against the likes of the Calibra and Probe, it will have to be a lot more accomplished than the disappointing car we drove in America. *Georg Kacher*

■ Many extras, no options ■ Seamless automatic ■ Unexpected drivetrain noise

Children should be seen and not heard: the GS300 looks more distinctive than its big brother, but sadly does not share its uncanny quietness

Making room for junior

LEXUS GS300

ENGINE:
2997cc, 6cyl, dohc, 24v, multi-point injection, 209bhp, 202lb ft of torque

PERFORMANCE:
Max speed 143mph, 0-60mph 8.6 seconds

DATE ON SALE:
20 October

PRICE:
£31,950

IT'S THE news that BMW, Jaguar and Mercedes most fear. Toyota's Lexus LS400, scourge of the luxury-car establishment, has a new kid brother with a mission: to double Lexus sales in Britain to 2200 in 1994.

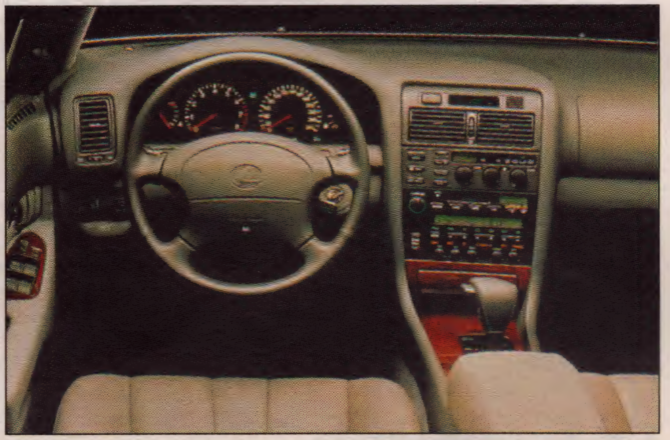
Although pricey at £31,950, the six-cylinder GS300 is still £10,000 less than the larger, faster V8. More to the point, it undercuts those uppercrust rivals (if not all mainstream ones) it seeks to dethrone. Toyota asserts that a Mercedes-Benz 320E equipped to the same level as the GS300 – with twin air-bags, ABS, air conditioning, leather, cruise, power everything, nine speakers, 12-disc CD and so on – would cost £45,249, more than £10,000 of that in extras. A comparable Jaguar XJ6 would be £33,366, a BMW 530, £39,714.

Based on a design by Giugiaro, who alludes in a promotional video to a 20-year association with Toyota, the GS300 is a striking long-nosed, stub-tailed, four-door wedge with more road presence than the anonymous LS400 (which now outsells Merc's S-class in Britain). For a biggish, luxury car, though, it is not very spacious: the boot is small, rear headroom marginal, aft legroom positively cramped.

A front-wheel drive V6 would have given a more space-efficient package, but rival Jags, Mercs and BMWs have straight-sixes and rear drive, so that is what the junior Lexus gets, too. The engine is the same 3.0-litre, 24-valve twin-cam as in the new Toyota Supra, but without the twin turbochargers.

Hopes that the LS400's uncanny quietness would rub off on the GS300 were dashed on indifferent Belgian roads that revealed accomplished rather than inspirational handling, and chassis refinement that's short of big brother's breathtaking benchmark. The tyres rumble and thunk like a Merc's (and more so than a Jag's) and the engine, virtually silent at idle, wails stridently when extended.

'Two-mode gearbox is as sensitive to your right foot's commands as it is seamlessly smooth'



Up front, the cabin is a beautifully finished, luxurious and ergonomic

Performance that's strong rather than vivid will not unduly worry the opposition. For a 32 grand car, an output of 209bhp is adequate, no more. The two-mode gearbox, as sensitive to your right foot's commands as it is seamlessly smooth, impresses more than the engine. There is no manual alternative. In fact, there are no extra cost options on offer. Everything that Toyota reckons customers need, with the possible exception of traction control (denied UK buyers on dubious cost-cutting grounds), is standard. The steering is a bit numb but the GS300 feels composed and secure, if not especially rewarding, and it clings on well. The sogginess criticised in US-spec cars has been addressed, for Europe, by stiffer suspension and wider tyres.

Rear-seat passengers may carp about room but up front the GS300 is hard to fault on comfort. Its heated seats, eight-way adjustable, are among the best, the driving position close to perfection. Remove the ignition key and the steering wheel hums to an 'easy access' position; insert it and the wheel hums back to where it was. The instruments – blacked out when the ignition is off – are paragons of clarity, the switchgear classy. Although the timber-capped interior is conventional to the point of being bland, it's beautifully finished.

Toyota modestly refers to the GS300 as 'the second best car in the world', after you know what. It is certainly not that, but with the backing of peripheral Lexus attributes, Toyota's confidence in the GS300 is surely not misplaced. *Roger Bell*

The US car was criticised for having a soggy suspension, which has been stiffened for Europe

Shark-nose drop-top

- Superb looks
- Amazing value
- 3.4-litre V6 only good for cruising

Chevrolet spared no expense giving the V6-engined Camaro rag-top a better spec than some mega-bucks rivals; sleek body panels are mainly plastic, frame has been stiffened

CHEVROLET CAMARO CONVERTIBLE V6

ENGINE:
3355cc, 6cyl, ohv 160bhp

PERFORMANCE:
Max speed 108mph (electronically limited), 0-60mph in 9.5sec (est)

DATE ON SALE IN UK:
Not planned

PRICE:
$18,500 (£12,400)

IT LOOKS like a million dollars, and has all the must-haves: a great body, power hood, airbags, big V6 – the works. Yet Stateside, Chevrolet's new open air Camaro costs the same as a hum-drum Cavalier would here in the UK; around £12,500. Hard to believe? You bet.

And this is no cheap, chop-shop conversion. Unlike the last rag-top Camaro which had all the backbone of blackcurrant jelly, this latest shark-nose Chevy was designed as a convertible from the outset. That meant incorporating the kind of inner strengthening normally reserved for armoured trucks.

Lowering and raising hood is easy

What comes as surprise though, is Chevrolet's decision not to penny-pinch on the labour-saving electric motors. Not only does the new Camaro have a top that goes up and down at the touch of a button, it's also fully lined and has a heated glass rear window. Even the mega-priced Merc SL and new Ferrari 348 Spider make do with plastic.

Lowering the hood is about as physically taxing as taking off your hat. Unclip two latches on the top of the windscreen, hit a button on the facia and watch the top fold back and the sun pour in. And the complete mechanism folds neatly into a deep well behind the rear seats.

Raising the lid is just as easy. Finger on the button and up it comes. Latching it doesn't mean blood, sweat or broken nails either. Chevrolet's engineers were well aware that close to 50 per cent of Camaro V6 Convertible buyers will be women.

Top down, the Camaro is a real joy to drive, particularly if you're cruising the Red Rock Canyon mountain roads, 50 or so miles west of Las Vegas in Wild West country. Blue skies, hot sun and a snaking two-lane blacktop – perfect open car conditions. And the new Camaro makes few demands of its occupants. Even at 100mph along an arrow straight desert road, it's a breeze, not a battering. No streaming eyes or follicle whiplash here. You don't even have to crank-up the hi-fi.

Hood up and there's as much civility as in any tin-top. Wind noise is only noticeable by its absence. That smallish rear window does give the interior a tunnel-like feel, but the general space of the cabin manages to calm any claustrophobia.

'Out west of Las Vegas under blue skies and a hot sun, the Camaro was a breeze'

Over the rough stuff, the Camaro feels remarkably taut and flex-free. It's not perfect. A deepish pot-hole or a sharp rut hit square-on will send a shudder through the body. But there were no squeaks or creaks to be heard – impressive when you consider the car has not only lost its roof, but is largely clad with plastic panels.

The 3.4-1itre V6 that powers the entry-level Camaro is certainly no ball of fire, particularly when coupled to the optional four-speed auto. Plenty of low-end pull makes the car feel lively enough and it'll happily to cruise at 80mph as long as there's petrol in the tank. But revving close to its 6200rpm red line it sounds gruff and gravelly.

No, the V6 is perfect for relaxed, laid-back, no-hurry cruising; for taking in the sights, sounds and smells that only an open-air car can provide. Leave it to the 5.7-litre, Corvette-engined Z28 Camaro rag-top to provide the real excitement.

Despite its shortage of horses – it musters a so-so 160 – the V6 Camaro Convertible is still a bundle of fun to drive. This is largely because its handling limits far exceed its performance. The power steering is well-weighted, if a touch wooden, and there's plenty of grip from soft-walled Goodyear Eagles.

The shame is that for the moment, there are no plans for right-hand drive Camaros. But hey, for the equivalent of under 13 grand, it may be worth taking that promised trip to Disney and shipping back a left-hooker yourself. *Howard Walker*

- Two new C-class models
- Bigger and better equipped
- Only modest price hikes

Coming up with diverse Benz

C-class equals business class and new Merc has sober-suited appeal

MERCEDES-BENZ C180/C280

ENGINE:
C180: 1799cc, 4cyl, dohc 16v, multi-point injection, 122bhp, 125lb ft of torque
C280: 2799cc, 6cyl, dohc 24v, multi-point injection, 193bhp, 199lb ft of torque

PERFORMANCE:
C180: Max speed 120mph, 0-62.mph 12.1sec C280: Max speed 143 mph, 0-62mph 8.5sec

DATE ON SALE:
C180 Now C280 March 1994

PRICE:
C180 £17,600-£20,740
C280 Est. £27,000-£30,000

C-CLASS is airline shorthand for business class, which commands a premium for extra frills and flexibility. How appropriate, then, that Mercedes-Benz chose C-class as the designation of its new range of compact saloons. More frills and flexibility at full-fare prices sums up the reborn baby Benz. Bigger, better-equipped, more poised and pokier, the C-class is predictably pricer than its predecessor. But the increases are reasonably modest and the choice of models is more extensive.

The entry level to C-class travel is the C180 Classic, which costs £300 more than the superseded 190E 1.8 at £17,600. Like the 190 1.8, the C180's combination of three-pointed star prestige and two-star pricing will ensure that it is regarded as the most popular of the C-clan.

But unlike the stodgy and skimpy 190, the C180 isn't so compromised by its cost. While the new dohc, four-valve 1.8-litre still struggles to haul the car's heft, it is more responsive to the foot and less offensive to the ear than the old two-valve lump. The new engine works better with the four-speed automatic transmission than the five-speed manual, which requires regular rowing of its long, notchy shift. The C180's interior ambience is much improved (although some of the trim patterns are eyesores), along with rear legroom, which no longer turns your knees into unintended ear muffs. Aiding the increased comfort level is superior suspension – composed and compliant – and more steering that is noticeably less lifeless – if still less than razor-sharp.

At the other end of the C-scale is the C280, which replaces the 190E 2.6. Powered by the 24-valve, 2.8-litre silky-six from the W124, the C280's British arrival is delayed until March next year, when its variants are confidently expected to weigh in at between £27,000-£30,000.

Possessing all the poise and sure-footedness of its four-cylinder siblings, the C280 adds oomph to the equation. Silent but deadly, it rushes forward with admirable urgency once the long and laggardly throttle pedal is pressed to the floor. The lazy low-down response is aggravated by the autobox's resistance to kickdown in fourth gear.

Overall, these extremes of the C-class are deceptive Benzes. Their air of conservative competence belies an ability to be fast and fluid. And, yes, even enjoyable to drive, not just satisfying to be seen in. *Mark Fogarty*

WCRS

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Town/County Postcode Telephone

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CAR 1603 13/10

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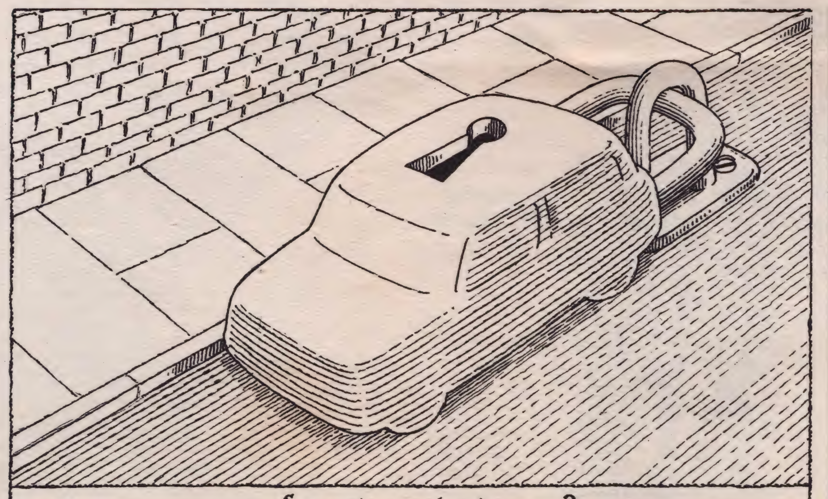

Security at last .....?

Immobilise your rising insurance

DON'T BLAME just the insurance barons and joy riders for the recent record hikes in car premiums. Car makers, too, should take a hefty share because new cars, in the main, are ridiculously easy to steal.

Better locks and alarms have been the commonest recent 'cures'. But most locks are still child's play to experienced crooks (ask any policeman, AA man or thief), and alarms are an imperfect fix. Even the sophisticated electronic plip-activated alarms are easy to break, as the recent furore over 'grabbers' exposed (grabbers help crooks 'read' electronic codes, then replicate them to gain access).

Beat the alarm, and you beat its ability to immobilise the car. What is more, alarms are as much a nuisance – they can squawk all night – as a deterrent. This urge to cry wolf is as much an incentive to thieves as an irritant to city dwellers.

Immobilisers, not linked to alarms, are a better idea. Nearly all modern petrol cars use electronic ignition systems that are easy to immobilise. So why don't manufacturers do it? If they did, joy riding would be cured overnight.

Sheer slow-wittedness is part of the problem. Foreign makers – nearly all cars are engineered abroad, even most that are built here – have had difficulty in quickly coming to terms with the full magnitude of the problem in Britain, Europe's car theft capital.

But there are signs, finally, that manufacturers are beginning to react. Citroën now fits keypad immobilisers to many ZX, Xantia and XM models; they're user-friendly and Citroën's research shows that most owners use them.

More impressive, Ford – once a technical plodder, but increasingly an innovator – has just launched a new device on the Escort called Pats (Passive Anti Theft System).

This is a big jump forward from keypad immobilisers or expensive alarms. In a nutshell, the key to the car contains a small transponder that activates the engine management. If the incorrect key is used, or no key at all, the engine won't start. The advantages are obvious: no awkward keypad, and no possibility of the system failing to immobilise the car.

New Escorts get the transponder key, now, as standard. All Fords will get it eventually. It represents the biggest advance in car security for many, many years.

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Letters

Moving metal

I read your 'exposé' on car selling agencies (Section 2, 22 September) having been a member of Cardata for sometime. I wonder at your reasons for the article. Firstly, I note that *Carweek* is published by Emap which has numerous car 'interest' titles that also advertise vehicles for sale, as you do.

The only direct competition to newspaper/magazine adverts (for private sellers) appears to be car selling agents. I would hate you to think I believe this to be sour grapes but I did note their absence in your cartoon.

Next, I wondered at the success of *Auto Trader, Exchange & Mart* and *Loot*, the three publications you mention. What! Only two potential buyers from these three marvellous titles? [*We placed ads in these publications for a used Golf – Ed.*] Had you been genuine in your need to sell (even at a ridiculously high price – which is what most private advertisers tend to want anyway) these would have amounted to 'time-wasters'

But why not put an ad in your own classified section and see the response, after all it is the 'fast way to sell your car'. No mention on your coupon that a reasonable price should be asked.

One last thought, if all the papers and magazines were as successful as they like to suggest, at 'selling cars fast' then there would be no car selling agents.

G Galvin
Chadwell Heath, Essex

(The Golf we advertised was heavily over-priced so that genuine buyers would ignore it. Our intention was to attract phone calls from car listing agencies. No criticism of the three publications was made or implied - Ed)

Classic veterans

I note that you have a contributor called Peter Dron – unusual name – and *Classic Car*'s editor is Tony Dron. Would I be right in assuming Peter is Tony's father?

Interesting to note that the Aston Martin DB7 is constructed from Jaguar's parts bin – and that new Jaguars are to be made from Ford's parts bin. I am wondering where Fords are going to get their parts from? Korea?

Tony Baxter
Arkley, Hertfordshire

(Appearances – see the picture of our regular columnist on this page – are obviously deceptive. The Drons tell us they're brothers – Ed)

Company car

Where did you find Peter Dron? His article saying our company car structure must be dismantled (8 September) was utter rubbish.

I have a company car and since I demonstrate equipment, show videos and do presentations – all carried in the car – it would be impossible to use a bus or train, so I would have to have a large enough salary for me to buy and fuel a car.

I would not be alone in this so there would be little reduction in cars on the road.

I am sorry to say that a wish to increase fuel tax was Peter Dron's only answer, which is inflationary to say the least. No, 'enough tax from car drivers' should be the message.

D Burnham
Teddington,West London

Telegraphing

I read with interest your article about why you hate the *Daily Telegraph*,(Wheel Life, 22 September). So do I, but for different reasons.

However, to address your desire for grand prix practice times to be available at a reasonable hour. Do you know about teletext?

The BBC does a good job of publishing practice times, also previews and reports.

Geoff Harrison
Alsager,Staffordshire

Hidden benefits

On the question of tolls on motorways, while I take the view that this is only being considered to generate additional revenue for the crumbling exchequer, I can see some possible benefits in their introduction.

For example, the presence of the toll booths requires that people stop at them (obvious, but messy if overlooked) which I believe creates a more alert attitude when driving.

Gone would be the days when you could travel hundreds of miles at high speeds without ever stopping and also, hopefully, the accompanying hypnotic state that seems to afflict many long-distance drivers.

The toll booths would also provide logical places for the boys in blue to survey the traffic and even conduct spot checks on both vehicle and driver condition.

Steve Peel
Alderley Edge,Cheshire

Parking perplex

Mike Rutherford's feature on Nick Lester (22 September) was wonderfully entertaining, but hardly an attempt to address the parking problems in the capital.

Illegal parking is condemned not only by so-called 'anti-car' outfits like Transport 2000, but also by the likes of the Freight Transport Association, the CBI, the Traffic Director and the Minister for Transport in London, Steven Norris.

They all recognise that illegal parking is a major contributor to London's transport congestion which costs industry millions of pounds.

The motorists, whose cause car-driver Mr Rutherford so tirelessly champions, may not like the measures which the parking director is putting forward, but if he succeeds there can be no doubt that he will have played an important part in assisting the economy of the capital.

John Stewart
Joint Co-ordinator
Lambeth Transport Group
Stockwell, London

Carweek begone

We received the issue of *Carweek* as per your recent mailing. There are a few comments we would wish to make, firstly from the contents of your supporting letter and from the comments in the new and used sections of your prices sections.

First of all you mention a 'quality car-buying audience'. They would have to be, to afford a Ferrari 348, Spider 850CSi or 911 Turbo, or to afford to insure just about anything else that you so graciously 'recommend'. Just who do you think reads this rubbish? You ask for our patronage and yet you proceed to slag every vehicle that does not achieve 0-60mph in under 6.0 seconds. You have obviously zero understanding of the four-wheel-drive market (or any other) and for some unknown reason feel that flippant comments about cars you don't like will suffice.

Please remove our company's name from your mailing list as that will save me the trouble of throwing any more of your material in the bin.

Paul Mageen
General Manager
Colin Appleyard Cars
Suzuki Dealer
Huddersfield
West Yorkshire

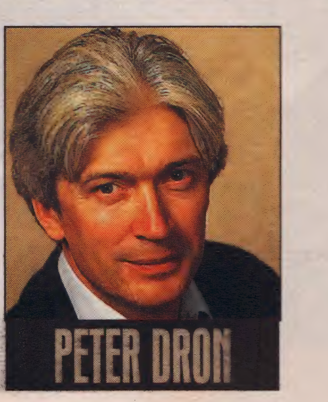
Hunting the duke of hazard

MURRAY WALKER tries his surreal best, but the BBC's grand prix coverage is a shadow of its former self without James Hunt's differently erratic contributions. Jackie Stewart stepped in once, listed his sponsors and expressed the eccentric view that Prost is better than Senna. Jonathan Palmer works hard, but the magic has gone; 'Muddly Talker' just rambles on without an acerbic 'Well, actually, Murray...' to arrest his flow.

James was never a close friend, but I'd known him for 25 years, from his first Formula Ford race in 1968. Our paths crossed occasionally, mostly at the trackside, but sometimes socially.

One midsummer's night in the early 1970s, I was at a party in Harrow-on-the-Hill. Hunt was there, too. Then in F2 and on the verge of his grand prix career, he was already a celebrity, a *Boy's Own* hero, who had been seen on live TV punching a fellow driver whose rash overtaking had led to them both crashing in the last bend of an F3 race at Crystal Palace. He'd had more than his share of accidents, but his nickname of 'Hunt the Shunt' was unfair.

It was a great party, held beside an enormous swimming pool in the large



gardens of a magnificent house. The police arrived at midnight, saying there had been complaints about the noise. This is police jargon for: 'We were passing, heard some music, and decided it was time for a free drink. Mine's a large one, or do you want trouble?'

A little later, with the music just as loud, James and I were standing by the pool, talking to one of the policemen, who was telling us gleefully about the motorists he'd booked that evening. He then launched into a series of anecdotes about great car chases of his dazzling career. 'I was trained at Hendon, you know,' he said in a cocky tone.

'Has anyone ever got away from you?' I asked (it can pay to be chummy). He thought for a bit. 'Well, there was one chase in Surrey. We were on the A217 south of Sutton, when this Mustang comes past. He must have been doing well over the ton. Maniac!'

James Hunt's eyebrows twitched. 'Did you catch him?' he asked.

'I could see him get sideways as he entered the right-hander at the end of the straight. He was doing one hell of a lick, but I threw the Rover into the bend at the same speed he'd been going.' He paused, his eyes clouding.

'What happened then?' asked James.

'We went straight off the road, through a fence, and into a field. The patrol car was totalled.' James looked away, biting his lip.

While James and I reflected silently on the bizarre and hilarious nature of coincidence, the policeman suddenly disappeared from between us, plunging into the deep end. He had been pushed in by a girl who had come to the party with Hunt. She had been dared to it by the other policeman.

'I still miss that Mustang,' said James wistfully.

My car and me
NOEL EDMONDS

'It's ludicrous that there is only one type of licence for "qualified" car drivers'

'I DO FIND the zealousness of the police towards motorists these days has surpassed what society requires,' says Noel Edmonds, the 44-year-old star of BBC TV's *House Party* and *Telly Addicts*.

'The really important issues of motoring and driving are not addressed by that kind of of police action. I passionately believe that they should spend their time looking after the people who get mugged or burgled. The priorities have become sadly disproportionate.'

It says something about the sorry state of driving on Britain's roads that a motoring enthusiast, former racing driver, non-stop traveller and Bentley/Range Rover-owning car buff like Noel Edmonds often can't be bothered to drive on them anymore.

'The car is being made the evil element in all this, but we have to start with the driver. It's ludicrous that there is only one type of licence for "qualified" drivers. I think that if you have a Jaguar XJS, for example, you should have a totally different licence which you only acquire after you have shown you have certain qualities. I also think that whatever type of licence you've earned, you should be regularly tested.

'And by testing people regularly, you raise revenue and create employment, and make people responsible from the age of 17 for their driving abilities.'

The 'ludicrously lax' licensing system that's used in Britain could learn a great deal from the structure that exists for private pilots, says Edmonds.

'I just find it astonishing that we don't introduce the system that works extremely well in the aviation world where you start with a single-engine plane, and if you want to move on to two engines, you have to acquire more qualifications and a different licence.'

Driving behaviour on some of Britain's roads is now so appalling that Edmonds – once a highly competitive saloon car racer – refuses to put up with it.

'I live in Devon and the way people drive in Exeter is the way people used to drive in London 20 years ago. I come up to London now and again and I usually have someone drive me.' But with so many commitments he still drives about 20,000 miles a year himself. The other 40,000 miles he does by helicopter.

'Aren't I lucky? I'm well aware that the alternative of using a helicopter doesn't exist for most people. The cost is high even if you use something like an R22 which is pushed in Britain as comparable in running costs to a Jag or BMW.

'Anyone who can drive can fly a helicopter. I can teach you to fly in 10 seconds. You pull the lever on the left and leave the ground. But learning to *pilot* a helicopter is a very different issue. You have to treat flying very, very seriously. I try to bring that same discipline to my driving. I've had a clean licence for 20 years. I suspect I've been fortunate.

'When I moved to Devon I was driving about 35,000 miles a year and I used a Bentley Turbo R. I've still got the car. I've also got a Range Rover, a Discovery and a Land Rover, for use on my estate.'

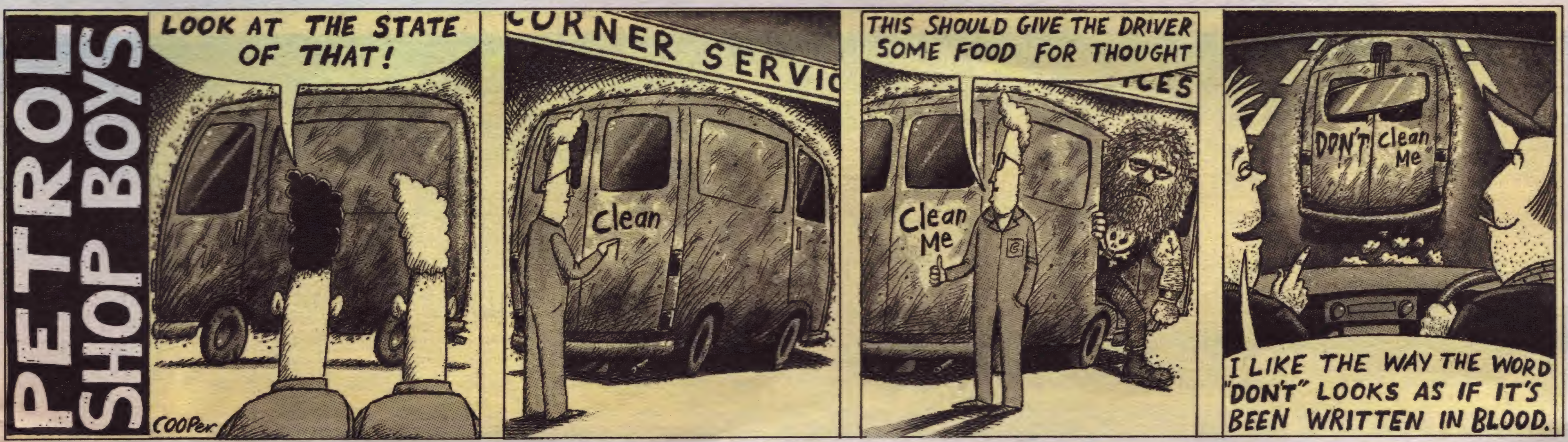
Is there a car he dreams of owning?

'I'd love a Ferrari or that beautiful Aston Martin DB7. I would have liked a Jaguar XJ220 if it had a V12. I had a go in one the other week and the owner told me he paid only £180,000 for it.'

Would he be tempted at that price?

'What – so the police can photograph me in a beautiful car?' **Mike Rutherford**

Welly addict: Noel Edmonds buys mostly British, has a Bentley Turbo R and range of Rovers – including one for the estate



Brindisi
AROUND THE WORLD

DAVID VIVIAN REPORTS

Driving the Latin way is analagous to bursting for a pee at the controls of a computer game you can't tear yourself away from. The image is probably unfair but founded largely on the technique of those who inhabit the north of Italy, the Milanese, Torinese and Romans.

Travel south, though, and the style of driving changes as intriguingly as the landscape and the economy. Take the road from Rome to Brindisi and you'll slip slowly into a new reality as elegant wealth cross-fades to grubby poverty, a structured road system to one that's just happened in the dust.

We flew down and hired a 1.4-litre Rover Metro to take us still further south to Europe's fastest high-speed circuit at Nardo on the coast of the Ionian Sea. The roads between the towns and villages are narrow, cratered and unpredictable, the towns and villages swarming with itinerant, post-siesta creatures.

Overwhelming, however, is the traffic. It doesn't flow in opposing streams but moves in all directions and at all speeds at the same time. Old but miraculously unrusty Fiat 500s materialise in front of you from side-on parking positions; mopeds transporting an extended family weave to and fro while motorised three-wheeled utility carts (a speciality of the region) obey no rules at all. Conditions for collision seem perfect yet, as one impact looms, the circumstances that support it dissolve into a new and equally hazardous situation which, in turn, transmutes into another.

A series of overlapping near-disasters, but we didn't see a single one. On the open road, drivers who appear to be dawdling suddenly lock onto your rear bumper and blast their horns. Just as suddenly they drop back to a canter. Or they overtake 20 cars in the face of an oncoming juggernaut. We followed one car, a Fiat Uno, that was being driven extraordinarily well for several miles. When a female head finally emerged from the driver's lap, it resumed its erratic progress.

Tarmac te

Now on sale in Britain at £55,000, the Viper breaks every rule of refined taste in its styling and

rrorist

performance. John Simister drives it on the Oxford prairie

WE GOT OFF TO A bad start, the Viper and I. We were loping along the A40, the Western Avenue bit in London where the three westbound lanes get a bit narrow, and I scraped the right-hand rear wheel on the central reservation's kerb.

Was I annoyed? Was I ever. Just when I thought I'd come to grips with the Viper's unreal width, just as I began to cease hugging the extreme left of my allotted road space, there it was. Scrrrunch.

So, a UK-specification Viper gains intimate contact with the edge of a UK-specification road, a road which thousands of UK-normal cars whisk along every day without incident. This is just the sort of confidence boost I need to prepare me for the taming of 400 big-chested horses once we're out on the Oxfordshire prairie.

Collecting my thoughts, I change up to sixth gear and settle to a 70mph, 1380rpm cruise. We're at the legal, laughable speed limit, and the engine is barely above tickover. Were this monster able to pull to its 6000rpm limit in sixth, the Viper would be

Back-to-basics runs deep in the Viper, and if that includes an engine developed from a truck, so be it

travelling at a whisker over 300mph. Thankfully, not even the UK car's 465lb ft of torque – up from the US-specification's paltry 450 – can surmount gearing that high.

So what is this outsize cartoon caricature of a TVR Griffith? It's the heir to the great American musclecar, with bigger biceps and hauncher haunches than ever before. Seven litres was the peak of development before, but the Viper has eight. Where spritual ancestors – Cobra, Corvette – had V8 engines, the Viper has a V10. It even hints at high technology, with aluminium block and head castings and a Lamborghini-developed engine management system.

PERFORMANCE

TOP SPEEDS (mph)	
Top gear	143
Fifth	166 (claimed)
Fourth	150
Third	115
Second	84
First	56
ACCELERATION THROUGH THE GEARS (sec)	
0-30	2.2
0-40	2.8
0-50	3.7
0-60	5.1
0-70	6.4
0-80	7.8
0-90	10.3
0-100	12.0
0-110	15.5
0-120	18.1
0-130	21.4
0-140	25.7
30-70	4.2
Standing 1/4 mile	13.3/108mph
Standing kilometre	24.3/139mph
ACCELERATION IN THE GEARS (sec) 3rd/4th/5th/6th	
30-50	2.9/3.9/6.1/10.1
40-60	2.9/3.7/5.9/10.0
50-70	2.9/3.8/6.0/10.4
60-80	2.9/3.8/5.8/10.9
70-90	3.2/3.9/5.8/11.7
80-100	3.5/4.2/6.4/13.1
FUEL CONSUMPTION	
Overall test mpg	16.6
Touring mpg	Approx 20
Gov't urban/56/75	Not quoted

The car's massive width poses difficult problems on narrow British roads, but the handling is precise, the steering sharp and wet-weather grip is surprisingly good on 10in-widerims bearing generous 1Michelin XGT 2 tyres

Some of the old ideals remain, though. The valves, just two per cylinder, are opened by old-fashioned pushrods triggered by a single, central camshaft. Back-to-basics simplicity runs deep in the Viper, and if that includes an engine developed from a Dodge truck unit, then so be it.

Dodge, Lamborghini. . . the Viper's parentage is clear. It's called a Dodge Viper in the States, but in Europe it will carry the marque name of the Chrysler parent company. That's because Dodge in Europe is a make of truck now owned by Renault. This French company used to own American Motors in the US, manufacturer of the Jeeps which now come under the Chrysler wing. And it's Britain's Jeep importer, Chrysler Jeep Imports UK, which now brings in the Viper for just £55,000. This is nothing to do with Chrysler UK (deceased), whose car division was bought out by Peugeot, French again. What a tangled web is woven.

Not that the Chrysler Viper is exactly typical of a big-corporation product. Not at all. Instead, it's the creation of Team Viper, a band of specialists in New Mack Avenue, Detroit, which also acts as a proving ground for new manufacturing technologies. Most of the Viper's body panels, for example, are made from Resin Transfer Moulding composites.

The finish of these panels is perfect, I muse, as I look along the vast, voluptuous expanse of bonnet. But the back-to-basics philosophy, however commendable to the purist, is proving a distinct pain as we whoosh along what has turned into the M40. The Viper has no side windows, and wind-buffeting makes conversation almost impossible.

Still, if you can't speak to your passenger, you can always smile to yourself at the engine's party tricks and enjoy torque instead of talk. Is there any other car which needs just 3.9 seconds to accelerate from 30 to 50mph in fourth gear, yet can go from 80 to 100mph, in the same gear, in 4.2 seconds? Third gear is yet more bombastic, with 2.9 and 3.5 seconds respectively for these same speed jumps. Or try fifth, with 6.1 and 6.4 seconds. This is torque that spreads over the tarmac like no other, rendering gearchanges redundant unless you're intent on entertainment.

But where's the soundtrack? The wind rushes, the tyres shriek and slap over joints in the road surface, there's even a whine from the differential, but there isn't much of an exhaust note. European Vipers have their exhausts exiting from the back, with those side pipes relegated to dummy status, but the aural experience is lacking.

This is more than a little strange. You know how wonderful an Audi Quattro sounds at full chat? That deep, harmonic, warbling five-cylinder beat? The Viper should sound like a Quattro in stereo, but it doesn't. There's an occasional hint of the hoped-for sonics, but for the most part it's a sound as flat as that of a lacklustre four-cylinder engine. Regulations be blowed. I want more noise, the sort of noise that brings an uncontrollable grin to my face when I have a good time in a TVR.

So far, then, I'm feeling a bit anti-climactic. But this is about to change, for we're leaving the motorway and heading into the Oxfordshire countryside (where there are, in fact, no prairies). Sweeping B-roads beckon, and I set the tail slithering a shade as I power out of a damp roundabout. 'Yes!' shouts the driver of a builder's pick-up truck. He's impressed.

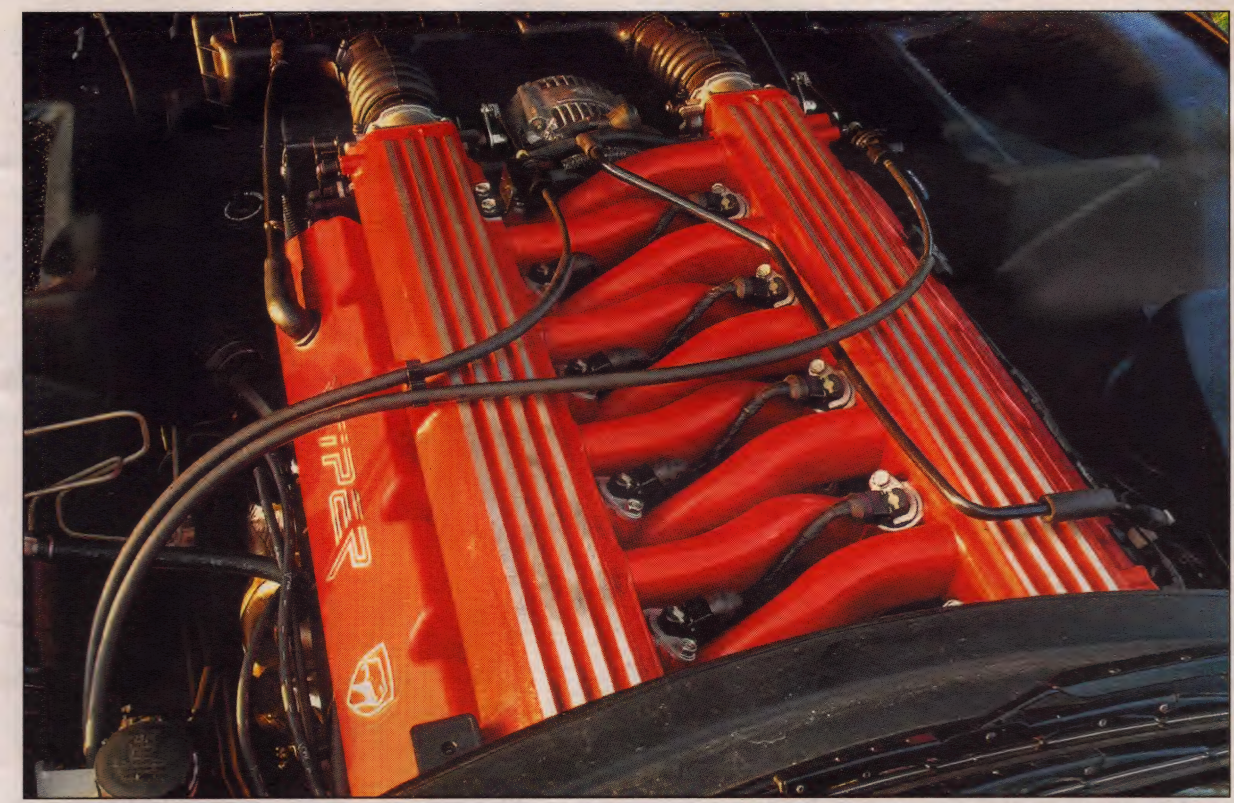
My mood changes. The Viper still feels real wide, but I'm starting to flow with it. This is proving easier than expected, provided there's a sufficiency of road to accommodate the Viper's plan area. Quick, super-sharp steering helps, the lack of feel that arises from its power assistance made up for by the car's precisely controllable balance. Besides, if there was no power assistance I would be unable to turn the steering wheel given that the front wheels wear tyres of 275/40 ZR17 dimensions. These are Michelin XGT 2s, by the way, not the expected Goodyears or Firestones. But if you think those front tyres are big, try the rears. The markings say 335/35 ZR17, and that's seriously huge. The spacesaver spare, by contrast, sits on a 4in rim instead of the proper wheels' 10in rim width.

If you can't speak to your passenger, you can always smile to yourself and enjoy torque instead of talk

You might think that such huge tyres, while giving glue-like grip in the dry, would be a major liability in the wet. But no. The Viper hangs in there with surprising stickiness, maintaining its gunsight-accurate turn-in at speeds far beyond the nerve of most drivers, including this one. The Snake might be powerful, but it has the grip to match. You have to be very brave, or lacking in imagination, to make this snake bite.

But, unless the road is wider than most of Britain's pleasure routes are, you and the Viper will never keep up with a well-driven hot hatchback. That's because it is simply too wide. It's a problem shared with such worthies as a Ferrari 512 TR and the Viper's partner in the Chrysler clan,

Driver operates a six-speed gearbox from an impressive cockpit. Grey-flocked dash contains instruments with black-on-white dials



Viper's 8.0-litre, V10 engine surpasses anything made in America's muscle-car heyday, though there's still only two valves per cylinder

the Lamborghini Diablo, so it's quite a glamorous problem to have. But when you have to contend with a steering wheel on the left as well (there will be no right-hand drive Vipers), the car's usefulness as a warp-drive road tool is called into question.

I ponder on this as the sky clouds over. Then the road's water coating is topped up and I start to drip. Oh, to be in the California sun, I muse, as I attempt to assemble the roof. You have to unfold a bundle of tent poles, struts and vinyl, assemble them preferably with the help of another pair of hands, and fit the result into a pair of slots and a pair of holes.

Next come the sidescreens. These slot into position easily enough, give or take a recalcitrant thumbscrew, but their thick foam edging does not have a limitless water-storage capacity. This means that, before long, there's a steady drip and it's coming in your direction. This is not a car for the British autumn.

Incidentally, as there are no outside door handles, you have to unzip the sidescreen windows to gain entry to a weather-protected Viper. Back to basics? There are limits. A TVR-style targa roof and wind-up windows would overcome the single biggest obstacle to the Viper's practicality.

There are upsides, though. The simple, grey-flocked dashboard, with its set of backlit, black-on-white instruments whose figures glow orange at night. The brutally striking looks. The surprisingly supple ride. The equally surprisingly unoutrageous fuel consumption, thanks to the sky-high gearing (we achieved 16.6mpg). And, of course, the outright, overtake-anything-in-any-gear performance.

Here it is, in black and white. From a standstill to 60mph, 5.1 seconds on a dampish track. (The factory claims a believable 4.6 in perfect conditions.) To 100mph, 12.0 seconds. A maximum speed of 150mph in fourth gear, 143mph in sixth. Chrysler claims 168mph in fifth, I claim parenthood, family responsibilities and a desire to keep my hearing. So we'll take Chrysler's word for it on that one.

Quick, yes? If I said I'd rather have a TVR Griffith at £22,000 less, and enjoy greater agility to the backbeat of a seismic soundtrack, you'd probably think I was missing the point. And if the point is pure pose value, then perhaps I am. I'm glad I've sampled the Viper, though, however miscast it is for our crowded island. Did you realise that each of its cylinders is nearly as big as an entire Daihatsu Mira engine? Well, there you are. ⭘

F1 MEN APPROVE OF VIPER'S BITE

Hardtop GTS Viper, seen here in prototype form, may be in production next year

MARTIN BRUNDLE I've always had a soft spot for the Viper. I was racing Dodge Daytonas in the States when the thing was launched and at one stage I thought I was going to have one of my own.

On paper, the Viper is brilliant and in the flesh it looks brilliant. It's not something you'd want to cruise great distances in, but that's not what it's designed for. It's the sort of car you want to go out and drive just for the sake of driving – nip down here, nip down there, 50 miles here, 50 miles there. It's perfect.

But with the English weather in mind, I have to admit I fancy the tin-top GTS more than the current rag top. That looks the absolute piece of kit to me, and I gather it may be in production in Detroit next year.

To me, the Viper looks like a sensible alternative to a classic car. The price of £55,000 is about right. It's plenty but it's not outrageous.

If you're tempted to rush out and buy an old Corvette, T-Bird, Stingray, or something like that, you just know it will be a horror story to try to keep running and pointing in the right direction.

STIRLING MOSS

The Viper is a seriously quick car and it's very enjoyable – although it is difficult to drive smoothly in traffic. But considering the width, I didn't feel that it was that big when it was on the road. It handles quite small, if you know what I mean.

It's a bit of a brute and a little coarse, and I found taming it quite a challenge. It's not for everyman. It's a fun car – trouble is, there aren't many places in Britain where you can have fun. To enjoy the car fully you have to drive it quickly and that isn't really feasible on our public roads.

The seats are very good (and I speak as somebody who doesn't like leather upholstery). The white dials are extremely clear. And even with the roof and side curtains installed, visibility isn't too bad – certainly it is better than I expected. I have no complaints about the overall appearance of the Viper. My first site of the car was in Las Vegas last summer. The top was down, it was clean, the weather was perfect, the roads were wide and the car was inspiring. Seeing the same car covered in grime with the roof in place and being used on damp, grey, narrow British roads is a different story.

The car's practicality is nil. If you buy something like this for that reason you need your head examined. You buy it for fun. The thought of cruising on a long journey is great – so long as you can go back home in it immediately after.

No-frills philosophy means the Viper has no exterior door handles or side windows. But the finish of the body panels – mainly in composite materials – is high quality, and the bold styling will stop a whole streetful of people

YOU CAN WITI

'Can't' is not in the new Terrano II's vocabulary. This 2 in 1 vehicle lets you sail up a 1 in 3 slope, or put your foot down through a foot and a half of flood water. Thanks to uncompromising 2.4 litre petrol or 2.7 litre turbo diesel engines. On the tarmac, bruiser becomes cruiser. Specially tuned suspension ensures a comfortable ride on the smooth (and a smooth ride on the rough). Switchable 2 to 4 wheel drive gives you the best of both worlds: 2-wheel for ON-road fuel economy and 4-wheel for OFF-road pulling power. Making it meaner on the street and

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tougher on the turf. Our 4x4 heritage has already made a big noise in Europe (although sound-proofing techniques like triple door seals would never let you know it). Both 3-door and versatile 5-door versions have free 3-year/60,000 mile warranties. Both are designed and built in Europe. And if you still don't like our King of the Sandcastle, you know where you can park it. If you do, phone 0345 800 600.

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Blowing your cover

Claims are down while car security is up. So why are you still paying megabucks for car insurance? Mike Rutherford reports

IF CAR OWNERSHIP was declining, road accidents were increasing, inflation was rampant, vehicles were less secure, car theft was rocketing and claims were rising, you'd forgive insurance companies for jacking up car insurance rates to obscene levels.

But the fact is that car ownership is increasing (lots of lovely new clients for insurers), accidents are decreasing, inflation is at its lowest level for a couple of decades, many modern cars are now like thief-proof mobile fortresses, and car theft has – in the insurance industry's own words – 'flattened out'. The icing on the cake is that motorists are also submitting fewer claims and repair costs have 'stabilised', admit the insurers. In real terms, repair charges have at worst stood still or at best have gone down.

So why are drivers still being legally and comprehensively mugged by insurance companies who've got the punters firmly by the balls? How has insurance taken over from vehicle depreciation as the number one financial killer for millions of drivers?

The Association of British Insurers suggests that we, the motorists who are on the receiving end of the hideous quotes and renewal notices, are *not* being fleeced during an era when circumstances look – on the surface at least – favourable for the industry. Premiums have gone up, the ABI admits, but the increases being imposed on motorists are justified, it says.

At least one expert, Jeffrey Salmon, disagrees however. As an independent loss assessor Salmon is in the unusual position of being in the thick of the insurance industry, but not on the side of the industry. He answers only to the public, who are his customers. And he is quite clear about the magnitude of the annual increases that have been imposed on motorists recently.

'I hear all sorts of figures from insurance companies and most of them are bull,' says Salmon, the managing director of London-based Salmon Assessors PLC. 'I reckon average [annual] increases have been between 50 and 60 percent. But that's the average. Some people had increases of only 10-20 percent, others had rises of 200 percent. And prices will continue to rise. I'd be surprised if they continue to shoot up at the same level as we've seen recently, but I'm in no doubt that premiums will continue to increase three or four times more than the rate of inflation.'

At the precise time when the amount insurance companies are pulling in and the amount they're paying out is narrowing dramatically (see 'Car Insurance' panel), why are they continuing to hike their prices? Salmon thinks he has the answer.

'They're trying to get back all the money they've lost over the last five or nine years when they went into non-core business. They're getting it back by screwing the public. It's farcical.'

But this is a farce that isn't funny. Car insurance premiums have been pushed up so shamelessly that people who have always driven without insurance will now justify their irresponsible behaviour more easily. Until recently, they had no excuse. Now they'll argue that they simply cannot afford the vastly over-priced piece of paper which says they're street legal. Insurance used to be touch and go for them. Now it's not even on the agenda.

Even drivers – mostly youngsters – who at least start off with the intention of acquiring legal cover are now effectively uninsured and uninsurable.

What's the problem, you may ask. Let them opt out of car driving for a year or two and patiently sit it out until they're a little bit older.

If only life were that simple and younger drivers thought that logically. Many already have cars parked tantalisingly outside their homes and, with some justification, they argue that they can't easily get rid of them. Remember, some were bought new from manufacturers who offered free insurance policies for one measly year.

A thief for sure, but many frustrated youngsters steal cars because they're uninsurable

So faced with the prospect of paying an annual insurance premium of thousands of pounds or selling their cars (assuming they can find a buyer) and losing thousands, what do countless numbers of drivers do? Neither. They opt for the third option – keeping their cars and driving without insurance.

Let's get our priorities right. The people who should be blamed most for driving uninsured are the law breakers who commit the offence. But some insurance companies must take their share of the blame. By providing younger drivers with ludicrous, prohibitively expensive quotes which they know their clients cannot pay, they've given birth to an uninsured and uninsurable underclass.

The uninsured take their chances and, even if they are caught, the paltry fines the courts impose are often only a fraction of the price they're being asked to stump up for insurance cover.

Even the ABI admits that around 10 percent of motorists are driving without cover. And you can bet that the association's figure is conservative.

'We estimate that one in 10 drivers has no insurance. There's no way of showing whether that figure has got worse since premiums got more expensive,' says an ABI spokesman.

This sort of activity is the propaganda weapon the insurers wield. But claims are dropping

Salmon has some even more worrying views on the subject.

'So many people are driving around uninsured at present. Out of every 100 clients I take on, 15 tell me the other driver was uninsured. And in poorer areas of Britain where crime and social problems are more prevalent, it wouldn't surprise me if 30 percent of drivers are uninsured.'

Not that every uninsured driver necessarily knows he is uninsured. There is now so much money at stake in the multi-billion pound motor insurance business in Britain that the criminals have inevitably moved in in a big way.

Tragedies such as this can be compounded if an uninsured driver is involved. When compensation for devasted lives and property is not available, insurers must share the blame

Photographs by Rex Features

Rising price of total security

Not satisfied with collecting more than £5.7 billion a year in motor premiums, some insurance companies may be making a few extra bob by forcing their clients to buy certain security devices – then receiving a commission from the manufacturers.

Does it happen, *Carweek* asked?

'We're not aware of it,' says the ABI.

'We've never taken money, commission or anything,' says the Norwich Union.

'Maybe with some companies – but not ours,' says Cobra Alarms.

'Yes,' says the AA.

Whether they're on a commission or not, take the recommendations of insurers with a pinch of salt. A while ago, Norwich Union was telling some of its 'high risk' customers to spend hundreds of pounds on VECTA immobilisers. And today? 'We've stopped recommending VECTA,' says the company. Did you invest in an expensive VECTA that the Norwich Union now feels is unworthy of its approval?

Quote costing

The insurance world is now such a jungle that companies have been formed to shop around for the best deals. Problem is that, unlike conventional brokers, they charge for their services. This is yet another example of the insurance business grabbing every penny it can – usually at the expense of desperate motorists.

It could be the thin end of the wedge. As the insurance world becomes more complex and searching for lower quotes becomes more time consuming, the conventional broker may need to spend more time than he can afford digging out the best quotes. And time is money. So can they afford to look as hard as they should? Maybe – but only if they get a flat fee from their clients.

'Insurance companies are getting back all the money they've lost over the past five years, by screwing the public'

Sophisticated bogus insurance companies have been formed and have blatantly advertised their worthless services to gullible and desperate drivers who are genuinely looking for no more than the cheapest quote.

RAC Insurance Services is a registered broker and is alarmed at the emergence of such companies – and not just because it is losing out to them in the race for customers' money.

'These fraudsters particularly target young drivers with high risk vehicles who can be easily tempted to part with their money without any consideration of their own security,' said an RAC spokesman. 'Fortunately, some duped motorists have established the fraud before a claim has arisen and only lose their premium. For others a claim could cost many thousands, maybe hundreds of thousands.'

The combination of deliberate law breaking from uninsured drivers and unintentional law breaking from drivers whose with bogus 'insurance certificates', has put enormous pressure on the Motor Insurance Bureau, the organisation which helps drivers making claims against uninsured drivers.

In 1991, the Bureau coughed up £18 million. Last year it paid out more than three times as much – £57 million. The figure will be even higher this year, proving the alarming trend.

And when you look at the £648 million that insurance companies paid out for so-called 'motor theft' in 1992, ask yourself how many of those 'thefts' should be in the 'fraud' category. Fraud is in the same league as driving without insurance. It has to be strongly condemned. But the other side of the coin is this: the more that people feel they're being ripped off by insurance companies, the more they'll feel justified in defrauding them.

There's plenty of evidence to show that the beleaguered insurance industry has recently been performing disastrously. But if the car arm got its act together it wouldn't need to resort to ludicrously high premiums. And a spin-off benefit would be that the criminals wouldn't find it so attractive to resort to fraud.

The Monopolies and Mergers Commission has already taken a look at the new car and petrol-retailing industries. And now the time is right for it to turn its attentions on the insurance business. MMC investigators would have a field day.

BRITAIN'S CAR INSURANCE BUSINESS

	1991	1992
Premiums (£ million)	5152	5732
Claims (£ million)	6341	6311
Difference between premiums and payouts (£ million)	-1189	-579

Source: ABI

These figures, supplied by the insurance industry, paint a gloomy picture. They clearly show that in recent years, insurance companies have paid out more in claims than they've received in premiums. But the gloomy picture is not a complete one. What this table fails to acknowlege is the fact that insurance companies earn considerable sums by investing the billions of pounds they receive from car insurance clients every year.

Before you shed a tear for the industry which sustained a £579 million underwriting loss in 1992, look at the £5732 million that the industry raked in in fees for premiums over the same one-year period. How much interest do you reckon the industry earned by wisely investing that £5732 million? When you've successfully answered that question ask yourself if car insurers are really losing as much money as they'd have you believe.

●**NEXT WEEK** *we test Tracker, the AA-backed security device claimed to recover 94 out of 100 stolen vehicles.*
●**PLUS** *we tip 10 cars that are fun to drive and friendly to insure*

HOTLINE If there's something you'd like Mike Rutherford to investigate, ring him on 071-490 2219. Or write to him at *Carweek*

Test drive your sense of sound

The silent Mazda Xedos 6

"It's like spending a night in the country, when the silence surrounds you, like a cloak. It's strange, you can grow so accustomed to noise, that not until it's gone, is it noticeable."

- 24 valve, V6 2.0i litre engine.
- Features from ABS to electric sunroof.
- Leather clad interior and driver's airbag in SE model.
- 3 year/60,000 mile warranty.
- 8 year anti-perforation warranty.
- 3 year European emergency assistance.
- Prices start from £18,122+.
- Holds its value better than any other car*.

+Price correct at time of going to press. Excludes delivery charge of £475, number plates and road fund licence. *'What Car?' May '93.

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Test drive your senses

AT LAST. YOUR CHANCE TO WIN THE ASTON MARTIN DB7.

FINAL PART

Carweek Seventh Heaven
COMPETITION

Here is your entry form. After 6 weeks waiting, now's the moment of truth.

Here's what you do.

Tick the box which you think is the correct answer to each of the seven questions, complete the tiebreaker, attach your tokens (more about tokens below) and send to us. Post in plenty of time to ensure your entry arrives by 20th October.

About the tokens. You noticed (judging by the number of phone calls we received, you *all* noticed) that last week's token, number 6, went missing from its normal position on the page opposite. We're sorry (still blaming the printer) and, for those who couldn't find it we've re-printed token 6 on this page.

To save you cutting it out and sticking it in place, we printed it in position on your entry form – along with this week's token 7. You need three more different CARWEEK numbered tokens to complete your entry. Also you may use tokens that appeared in newspaper advertising or from our DB7 exhibitions at main rail stations.

Please include your phone number, so we may ring with the good news, and keep Wednesday, 27th October 1993 clear in your diary. Because, if you win one of the major prizes, we'll invite you along to the London Motor Show for the presentation.

RULES

1. No responsibility can be accepted for late, lost or mislaid entries.
2. Entries from employees and their families of EMAP National Publications and companies involved in the supply of prizes for this competition are not permitted.
3. All entries must be on the official entry form only, (available 13th October issue) or direct from Carweek, 34 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AV. Have all seven questions answered and send complete with five different (weekly numbered) original Carweek tokens.
4. The 57 winning entries will have answered all seven questions correctly, collected five different genuine Carweek tokens and who in the Judges' opinion provided the best tie breakers. The editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
5. No cash, credit or alternatives are available.
6. Insurance of the Aston Martin DB7 prize is the responsibility of the winner.
7. All winners will be notified by post within 21 days of the closing date, and published in the next issue of Carweek.
8. All prizes will be supplied to the winners as and when available from the suppliers.
9. All entrants must be aged 18 or over. Proof of age and other criteria will be requested from some prize winners.
10. Entries must be received by 5.30 pm on 20th October, 1993.
11. Some prizes are subject to age and other criteria. In the case of a winner not conforming to the criteria an alternative prize will be offered. A full detailed list of prizes is available on request from: Carweek, 34 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AV.
12. All entries not conforming with the rules of this competition will be automatically disqualified.

YOUR ENTRY FORM

ANSWER ALL 7 QUESTIONS. TICK THE BOX THAT YOU THINK IS THE CORRECT ANSWER.

1. **What does the designation "DB" from the Aston Martin range stand for?** ☐ Derrick Bowen? ☐ David Brown? ☐ David Burnett?
2. **On which Aston Martin "DB" model was the first "Shooting Brake" version introduced?** ☐ DB2? ☐ DBS V8? ☐ DB5?
3. **Which model was James Bond's first Aston Martin?** ☐ DB5? ☐ AM V8? ☐ Virage?
4. **On which Aston Martin model did Disc Brakes first appear as standard equipment?** ☐ Ulster? ☐ DB2/4 MkIII? ☐ Virage?
5. **What saloon car is also built by Aston Martin?** ☐ Lagonda? ☐ Lanchester? ☐ Bristol?
6. **Which British racing driver raced Aston Martin DB3S works' cars?** ☐ Martin Brundle? ☐ Stirling Moss? ☐ Andy Rouse?
7. **Where are Aston Martins manufactured?** ☐ Coventry? ☐ Sunderland? ☐ Newport Pagnell?

ATTACH ANY VALID TOKEN HERE. IT MUST BE DIFFERENT FROM ALL THE OTHERS.

ATTACH ANY VALID TOKEN HERE. IT MUST BE DIFFERENT FROM ALL THE OTHERS.

ATTACH ANY VALID TOKEN HERE. IT MUST BE DIFFERENT FROM ALL THE OTHERS.

TIE BREAKER (Complete in ten words or fewer)

"I would be in seventh heaven if I won because . . .

NAME:

ADDRESS:

POSTCODE:

DAYTIME PHONE NO: AGE:
(For insurance purposes)

Remember to attach three more official CARWEEK tokens and send in an envelope to: **CARWEEK DB7 COMPETITION, P.O. BOX 84, PETERBOROUGH PE4 5HB.** Entries to reach us no later than 5.30pm Wednesday, 20th October 1993.

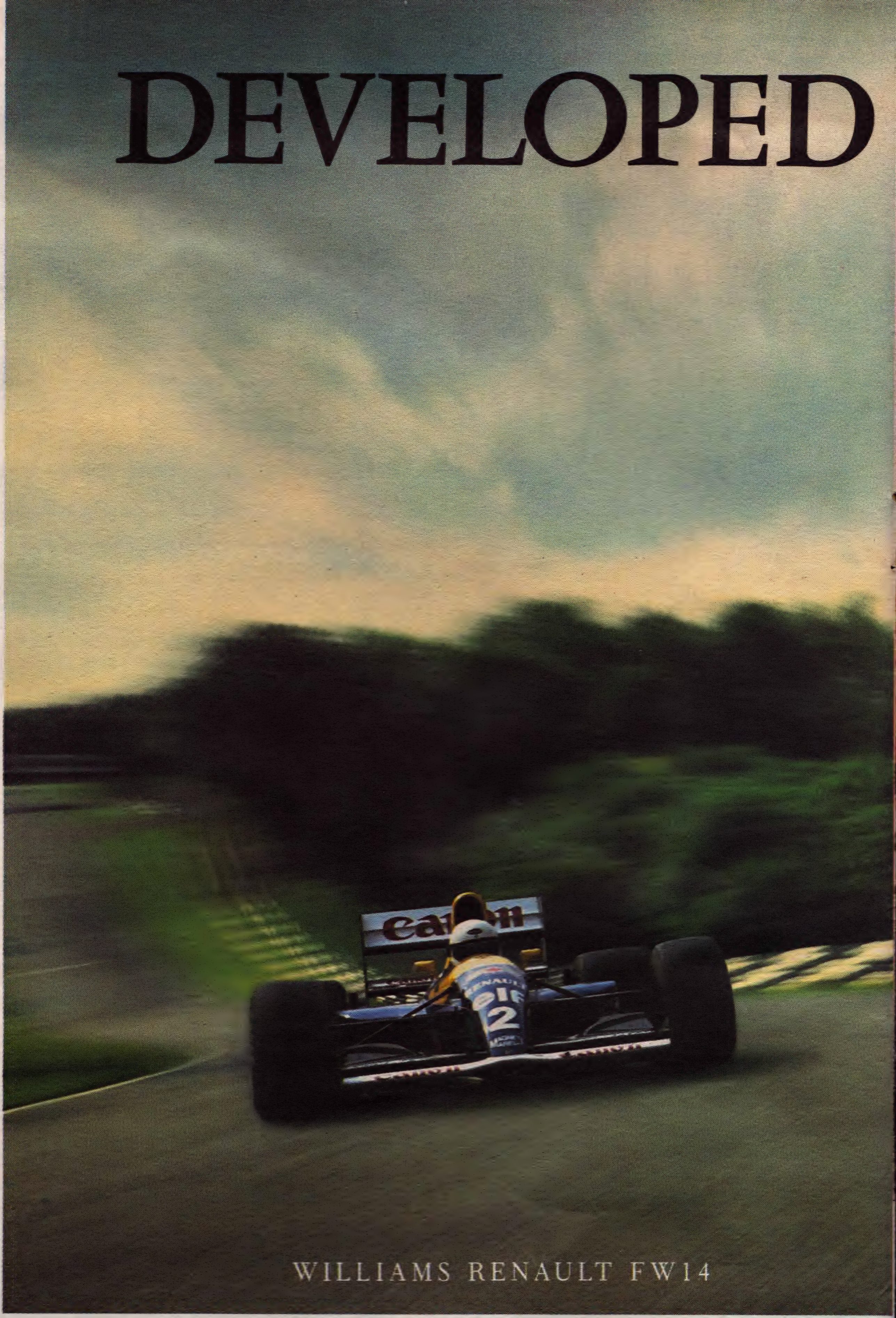
On occasion EMAP National Publications Ltd, publishers of CARWEEK, may permit other reputable companies to make offers of products or services which we believe may be of interest to our customers. If you DO NOT wish to have the details given here passed on, please tick the box. ☐

ASTON MARTIN
6
Q. Which British racing driver raced Aston Martin DB3S works' cars?
A. (I) Martin Brundle? (II) Stirling Moss? (III) Andy Rouse?
DB7 TOKEN

ASTON MARTIN
7
Q. Where are Aston Martins manufactured?
A. (I) Coventry? (II) Sunderland? (III) Newport Pagnell?
DB7 TOKEN

FILL IT IN. POST IT EARLY. AND GOOD LUCK.

DEVELOPED



WILLIAMS RENAULT FW14

If you want to get ahead you've got to work weekends.

That's the maxim of the engineers at Renault Sport.

Not only have they helped the Williams-Renault Formula One cars take 1st and 2nd spot on Grand Prix Sundays, they've also found time to build the ultimate hot hatch – the Clio Williams.

Described by *Autosport* as "probably the most exciting front-wheel drive machine yet created," the Clio Williams is based on its 16 Valve cousin, itself no stranger to awards.

First, the engine. The regular 1.8 litre 16V unit has now been bored out to 1995cc, to develop 150 bhp. That gives you a 0-62 time of just 7.8 secs and (assuming an F1 circuit is to hand) a top speed of 134 mph.

Talking torque, there's an astonishing 129lb ft of it at 4500 rpm. And 85% of maximum torque is at your command from 2500 rpm, giving you, in the words of *Performance Car*, "more guts per lb than a Civic VTI, Astra GSi, RS2000 or any other hot hatch you care to mention." The ride has more grip, more agility and more refinement, too, thanks to revised springs, recalibrated dampers and stiffer anti-roll bars.

"Few four-wheel drive supercars can compete at this level either in terms of endearment or cornering speeds." (Thank you again, *Autosport*.)

Proud owners-to-be will notice just one flaw: the Clio Williams is part of a limited run for the sake of rally homologation.

RENAULT
A CERTAIN FLAIR

WORLD CHAMPION Williams RENAULT FORMULA 1 · 1992

Quotes courtesy of Autosport 13 May 1993, Performance Car July 1993, and What Car? July 1993. All Renault Clio Williams have a 12-month unlimited mileage warranty with free RAC membership plus an 8-year anti-corrosion services supplied by agreement between the customer and the dealer are not included. Price correct at time of going to press. This advertisement is placed on

BY SUNDAY DRIVERS.

And a price tag of only £13,275 is likely to make it scarcer still.

If you'd like to know more about the machine *What Car?* dubbed "the best small hot hatchback we've driven," or about its sporty siblings, the Clio 16V and RSi, clip the coupon now.

Pipe-smoking trilby-wearers need not apply.

To: Renault UK, FREEPOST, PO Box 21, Thame, Oxon OX9 3BR. For more information about the new Renault Clio Williams, fill in the coupon or call Renault Freephone **0800 525150** CW CWK413

Mr/Mrs/Miss (please delete) ____________ BLOCK CAPITALS

Address ____________

Town and County ____________ Postcode ____________

Telephone ____________ Age (if under 18) ____________

Present car make and model ____________
(eg Clio RT)

Tick box for 'Motability' details ☐

Registration Letter ____ Month/Year you expect to replace M M Y Y
(eg "H")

RENAULT CLIO

warranty. Car featured Renault Clio Williams £13,275. Excludes Renault "Key-in-hand" charge of £425 which covers delivery to the dealer, number plates and security window etching. Government road fund licence and other goods or behalf of the vehicle importer, Renault UK Ltd., Western Avenue, London W3 0RZ, and not individual franchise holders. **RENAULT recommend elf lubricants.**

Little misers

Which budget hatch is as economical as it is endearing?

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MIKE BAILIE

VAUXHALL CORSA LS 1.5 TD v CITROEN AX 1.4 ECHO D 1.3 GSe v VAUXHALL CORSA

1.2i E-DRIVE v DAIHATSU CHARADE 1.3 GSe

The three-door AX is the car responsible for starting the recent diesel revolution

CITROEN AX D	ENGINE	PERFORMANCE
PRICE £7775	1360cc, 4cyl, sohc 8v, indirect injection, 53bhp, 62lb ft torque	0-60mph 18.8sec, max 87mph, average 43mpg

Upright-looking Daihatsu Charade is least adventurous design, and poorest handling

DAIHATSU CHARADE	ENGINE	PERFORMANCE
PRICE £7995	1296cc, 4cyl, sohc 16v, multi-point injection, 84bhp, 77lb ft torque	0-60mph 12.1sec, max 97mph, average 37.9mpg

Snazzy Corsa E-drive has air of a pert raceabout, makes it a real hit in showrooms

VAUXHALL CORSA E-DRIVE	ENGINE	PERFORMANCE
PRICE £6795	1195cc, 4cyl, sohc 8v, single-point injection, 45bhp, 65lb ft torque	0-60mph 18.8sec, max 83mph, average 40.5mpg

Five-door turbodiesel looks the part: a space-efficient modern-concept load-carrier

VAUXHALL CORSA TD	ENGINE	PERFORMANCE
PRICE £8665	1488cc, 4cyl, sohc 8v, indirect injection, 67bhp, 97lb ft torque	0-60mph 13.7sec, max 98mph, average 40.7mpg

Diesel power has proved one of motoring's biggest success stories. No longer reviled for their sloth and bad manners, oil-burners are these days revered for their frugality and increasing refinement - so much so that a whole new class of small, petrol-engined hatchbacks has sprung up to fight the diesel on its home territory: economy.

Of the four cars we assembled for this test, one in particular has a lot to live up to. For Daihatsu has decided to drop diesel engines from its facelifted Charade range, justifying the move by claiming that the £7995 Charade GSe, with its frugal 1.3-litre engine and tall, rev-reducing gearing, is as economical as its diesel rivals.

Vauxhall, on the other hand, is marketing two rival models from the same range: the basic, economy-optimised £6765 petrol 1.2i E-drive, and the pricier but better equipped £8665 1.5 TD LS turbodiesel. The final member of the quartet is the £7775 Citroën AX 1.4 Echo diesel, undisputed mpg-meister and the small car that started the diesel re-education process

SHOWROOM APPEAL

VISIT ANY Vauxhall dealer and you will see greasy marks all over the showroom window where multitudes smitten by the looks of the Corsa have peered in. In both three- and five-door configurations, the Corsa looks a little bundle of fun. It's the same story inside: the combination of shape, form and texture makes the Corsa's one of the best small car interiors ever.

Upright, unadventurous and crushingly bland inside and out, it is hard to believe that Daihatsu's Charade was launched only this year. The interior, too, looks like a hangover from the days when grey was good and more grey was better.

The real old fogey of the group is the Citroën AX, though it still looks fresh. In Echo trim, the cabin ambience is unashamedly basic, featuring a lot of untrimmed, painted metal, while outside, the simple wheeltrims and unadorned body maintain the honest clean-cut image.

UNDER THE SKIN

WHILE ALL these cars share a single purpose - to provide excellent fuel economy and nippy performance - their nuts and bolts display interesting differences. For a start, none of the cars has the same engine capacity.

Smallest of the group, and the one most overtly biased for frugality, is the petrol-powered Corsa 1.2i E-drive, which produces a puny 45bhp at 4600rpm and 65lb ft of torque. Its engine has been optimised for fuel economy and low emissions.

Next up is the Charade 1.3 GSe. Never has 101cc made such a difference, for the Daihatsu has an advantage of more than 30bhp over the petrol Corsa, developing 84bhp at 6500rpm and 77lb ft at 5000rpm.

Of the two diesels in the test, Citroën's AX has the smaller power unit. Displacing 1360cc it develops a naturally aspirated 53bhp at 5000rpm and delivers 62lb ft of torque at a lowly 2500rpm. The Corsa TD uses a turbocharger to boost the 1488cc Isuzu-sourced motor. Rev the engine to 4600rpm and 67bhp will be available, while 2000rpm earlier, a hefty 97lb ft of torque is on tap.

Both Corsas use MacPherson strut front ends and Vauxhall's compound crank rear end, though the TD also benefits from front and rear anti-roll bars. Daihatsu has stuck to the usual Japanese set-up of struts and coil springs at the front combined with dual-links at the back, while the AX is fitted with a favourite French cocktail of MacPherson struts at the front, trailing arms and torsion bars at the back.

PERFORMANCE

PREPARE TO be surprised. Although the Daihatsu has by far the highest power output, it is the Corsa TD that takes the performance laurels. Sprinting through the gears, the Charade is the faster, reaching 60mph in 12.1 seconds against the Corsa TD's 13.7, but the Corsa's low-rev torque and sensible gear ratios see it walk away from the Charade in real-life driving. Hamstrung by gearing so ridiculously tall that it achieves the same speed (97mph) in third as it does in fourth, it's not surprising that the Charade's fourth-gear 50-70mph time of 19.5 seconds is a massive eight seconds slower than the Corsa TD's. The TD's well chosen gear ratios also prove their worth when it comes to maximum speed, allowing the Corsa to reach its 98mph max in fifth gear.

The AX and Corsa E-drive are more evenly matched. As far as all-out acceleration goes, there's nothing in it: both reach 60mph in 18.8 seconds. When it comes to maximum speed, the under-powered Corsa E-drive has to give best to the AX, but only by less than lmph. In round numbers they both do 87mph, though you'll have more fun doing it in the Citroën.

Charade has the best driving position, but occupants must endure a sea of dreary grey plastic. Seats also look uninviting

Away from the test track, one thing quickly becomes clear: the diesels' performance is far more accessible than that of the petrol cars, both of which require a very heavy right foot if they are to move with any urgency.

The worst culprit is the Corsa E-drive which, on the road, really does feel gutless. In the quest for outstanding government fuel figures, Vauxhall appears to have lost sight of reality.

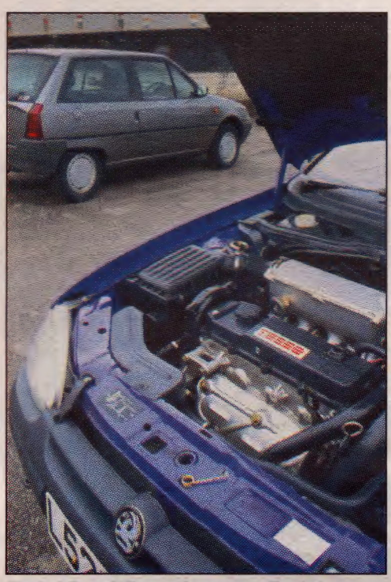
The Daihatsu may have a relative abundance of power but it, too, suffers from limp performance. Only when the car is held in the lower gears does it display anything that could properly be termed acceleration. This means frequent use of the gearbox which, fortunately, has a meaty shift action.

Not so the Corsa's. Rubbery, sloppy and indistinct of gait, the Vauxhall's gearbox is probably its worst aspect. Lifting off or pressing on the throttle can also cause uncomfortable levels of jerky transmission shunt.

The AX diesel always used to be a sprightly performer, but its new, taller gear ratios have blunted performance.

Daihatsu has highest power output, but tall gearing means poor 50-70mph time

Vauxhall seats are adequately supportive; the five-door has better rear headroom



Turbodiesel Corsa has excellent torque

The engine's delivery is still smooth, however, and the gearchange is flick-switch quick. It's an amenable little car and a much better road companion than the Corsa E-drive.

HANDLING AND RIDE

FOUL WEATHER demonstrated that these small, lightweight cars love the wet. Compact dimensions, able chassis, low power and skinny tyres that cut through water means that all of these cars can be punted along at a fair old lick, while drivers of larger, more powerful cars splosh along meekly behind.

Despite their shared suspension parts the Corsas fill the top and bottom spots in this category. The TD, with anti-roll bars front and rear, displayed more willingness in the corners and felt generally sharper. Body roll was well contained and grip from the 165/70 x 13 Firestone tyres was strong and progressive. The E-drive, with narrower 145/70 x 13 tyres, was less satisfying, the absence of anti-roll bars creating a much more roly-poly cornering stance. The steering was also an area of great differences. The TD's optional power-assisted set-up (£357) requires only 2.8 turns lock-to-lock while the E-drive's unassisted system needs 4.1. After just one corner, you'll appreciate the difference, in weight, feel and precision, too.

The Charade isn't the heaviest car in the group but it feels it. This is most noticeable during fast cornering, when more weight is transferred to the outside rear wheel. It feels less well balanced than the other cars.

Most comfortable in terms of ride is the Citroën, which soaks up all manner of surface imperfections. Handling has not been sacrificed either, the AX remaining an enthusiastic performer when the roads start to meander. The unassisted steering may be a little on the heavy side but it is sharp, allowing the AX to be placed with pin-point accuracy. The brakes are effective and have firm pedal feel.

COMFORT AND SPACE

SMALL THESE cars may be, but none of them is short of room inside. Most Tardis-like are the Corsas which have amazingly capacious cabins. Both three- and five-door versions are equally generous with front space, although the rear of the five-door provides slightly more headroom. The seats are attractive and adequately supportive, but the driving position is hampered by strangely positioned pedals. The throttle feels too close while the clutch feels too far away.

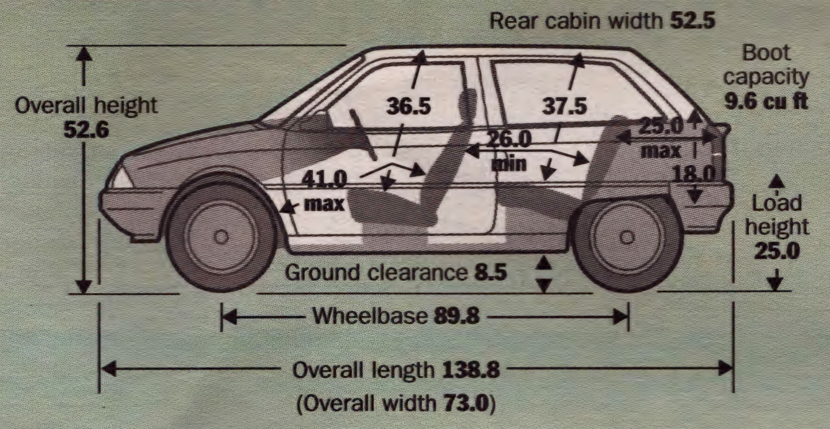
SPECIFICATION

Model	CITROEN AX 1.4 ECHO D	DAIHATSU CHARADE 1.3 GSe	VAUXHALL CORSA MERIT 1.2i E-Drive	VAUXHALL CORSA LS 1.5 TD
Price	£7775	£7995	£6795	£8665
ENGINE				
Engine position	Front, transverse	Front, transverse	Front, transverse	Front transverse
Cylinders	4 in line	4 in line	4 in line	4 in line
Capacity, cc	1360	1296	1195	1488
Max power, bhp/rpm	53/5000	84/6500	45/4600	67/4600
Max torque, lb ft/rpm	62/2500	77/5000	65/2800	97/2600
Bore/stroke	75/77	76/71.4	72/73.4	76/82
Compression ratio	22.0:1	9.5:1	10.0:1	22.5:1
Valvegear	sohc 8v	sohc 16v	sohc 8v	sohc 8v
Management	Indirect injection	MPFI	SPFI	Indirect injection
TRANSMISSION				
Drive	Front wheels	Front wheels	Front wheels	Front wheels
Gear ratios, mph/1000rpm				
First	3.42/5.07	3.42/5.08	3.55/4.85	3.55/4.85
Second	1.81/9.58	1.84/9.45	1.96/8.78	1.96/8.78
Third	1.28/13.59	1.25/13.92	1.30/13.24	1.30/13.24
Fourth	0.98/17.79	0.864/20.13	0.89/19.34	0.89/19.34
Fifth	0.77/22.6	0.71/24.50	0.71/24.24	0.71/24.24
Reverse	3.58	3.14	3.31	3.31
Final drive	3.59:1	3.65:1	3.74:1	3.74:1
CHASSIS				
Front suspension	MacPherson struts, coils, anti-roll bar	MacPherson struts, coils, dampers	Struts, coils, lower wishbones,	Struts, coils, lower wishbones, anti-roll bar
Rear suspension	Trailing arms with torsion bars	Struts, dual links, coils, dampers, anti-roll bar	Torsion beam, coils	Torsion beam, coils, anti-roll bar
Steering	Rack and pinion	Power assisted rack and pinion	Rack and pinion	Power-assisted rack and pinion
Turning circle, feet	33.5	30.2	31.2	32.5
Turns lock-to-lock	3.3	3.2	4.1	2.8
Front brakes	Disc	Disc	Disc	Disc
Rear brakes	Drum	Drum	Drum	Drum
Tyres	155/70 R13	165/70 R13	145/70 R13	165/70 R13
WEIGHT				
Kerb weight, kg	720	835	845	945
Power/weight ratio	75bhp/ton	102bhp/ton	54bhp/ton	72.8bhp/ton
COSTS AND SERVICE				
Insurance group	6	10	3	5
Guarantee, mths/miles	12/unlimited	36/unlimited	12/unlimited	12/unlimited
Anti-rust, years	6	6	6	6
Service minor	—	—	—	4500
intermediate	6,000	6000	9000	9000
major	12,000	12,000	18,000	18,000
EQUIPMENT, OPTIONS				
Airbag	no	no	no	no
Alarm/immobiliser	no	no	£178	£178
Alloy wheels	no	no	no	no
Anti-lock brakes	no	no	no	£907
Auto transmission	no	no	no	no
Central locking	no	no	no	no
Electric mirrors	no	no	no	no
Electric windows	no	no	no	no
Internal boot release	no	yes	no	no
Power steering	no	yes	no	£357
Seat belt height adjust	no	no	yes	yes
Seat belt tensioners	no	no	yes	yes
Seat height/tilt	no	no	no	£79
Seat lumbar	no	no	no	no
Side impact bars	no	no	yes	yes
Split/fold rear seat	£110	yes	no	yes
Steering height/reach	no	no	no	no
Stereo	4-speaker	4-speaker	4-speaker	6-speaker
Sunroof	yes	no	no	£502
Tinted glass	yes	yes	yes	yes

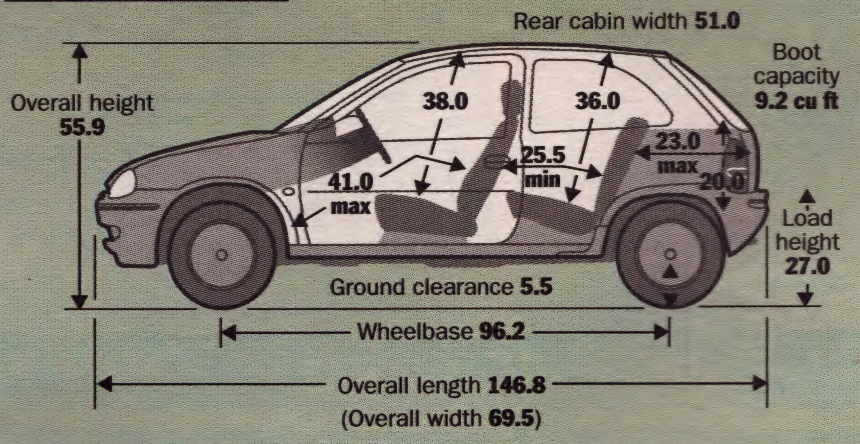
PERFORMANCE

	CITROEN	DAIHATSU	VAUXHALL	VAUXHALL
TOP SPEEDS (mph)				
Top gear	87	85.8	83	98
Fourth	83	97	87	96
Third	71	97	77	68
Second	51	66	52	47
First	28	37	29	26
ACCELERATION THROUGH THE GEARS (sec)				
0-30	5.1	4.2	5.4	4.4
0-40	8.5	6.4	8.3	6.4
0-50	12.8	9.1	12.3	9.9
0-60	18.8	12.1	18.8	13.7
0-70	28.4	17.0	27.6	19.5
0-80	47.9	23.6	46.9	28.5
0-90	–	34.5	–	46.1
0-100	–	–	–	–
30-70	23.3	12.8	22.2	15.1
Standing 1/4 mile	21.4/63mph	19.1/74mph	21.5/63mph	19.6/70mph
Standing kilometre	40.3/76mph	35.1/90mph	40.1/77mph	36.5/86mph
ACCELERATION IN THE GEARS (sec) 3rd/4th/5th				
30-50	9.7/13.8/–	8.5/15.3/–	8.5/15.1/–	6.5/11.1/18.4
40-60	10.7/15.7/–	9.1/16.0/–	9.7/15.3/–	7.3/10.5/17.9
50-70	14.4/22.2/–	10.0/19.5/–	14.0/18.7/–	–/11.5/17.4
60-80	–/32.6/–	11.4/25.0/–	–/28.2/–	–/15.6/20.8
70-90	–/–/–	15.4/–/–	–/–/–	–/–/–
80-100	–/–/–	–/–/–	–/–/–	–/–/–
SPEEDOMETER				
True mph	Indicated			
30	34	32	35	35
50	54	52	55	55
70	74	72	76	75
FUEL CONSUMPTION				
Overall test mpg	43	37.9	40.5	40.7
Test track mpg	27.9	26.4	26.3	29.1
Touring mpg	67.5	47	41.4	52.8
Gov't urban/56/75	62.8/85.6/58.9	42.8/60.1/42.2	39.2/64.2/45.6	45.6/70.6/49.6
Range at touring mpg	641 miles	517 miles	418 miles	533 miles
Tank galls/litres	9.5/43	11/49.5	10.1/46	10.1/46

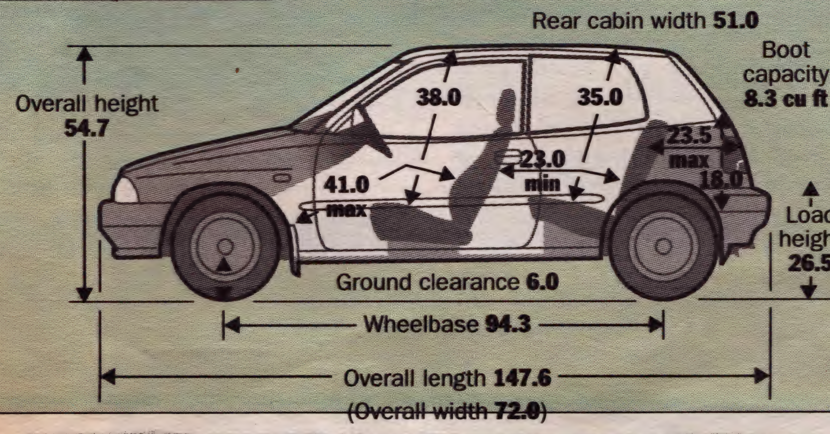
CITROEN AX D



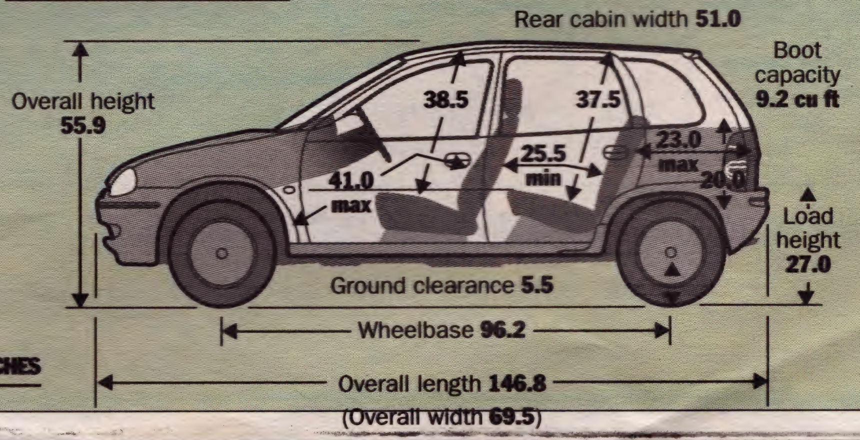
VAUXHALL CORSA E-DRIVE



DAIHATSU CHARADE



VAUXHALL CORSA TD



ALL DIMENSIONS IN INCHES

SECONDS, FEET, MILES AND YEARS IN FRONT.

AT £146 A MONTH OVER 2 YEARS, NOTHING ELSE MEASURES UP TO THE CARINA E.

	VAUXHALL CAVALIER 1.6i LS 4-DOOR	FORD MONDEO 1.6i LX 4-DOOR	PEUGEOT 405 1.6i GL 4-DOOR	NISSAN PRIMERA 1.6 LX 4-DOOR	TOYOTA CARINA E 1.6 XLi 4-DOOR	
0-60 mph (secs)	13.0	12.8	14.3	11.5	11.2	SECONDS IN FRONT
Boot Capacity (cu. ft)	18.7	17.0	16.6	16.6	19.2	FEET IN FRONT
†Mpg at 56 mph 75mph/Urban	54.3 41.5/31.7	51.4 39.8/28.0	48.7 36.2/28.8	52.3 40.9/31.7	57.6 43.5/35.3	MILES IN FRONT
3 year/ 60,000 mile manufacturer's warranty	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YEARS IN FRONT

TOYOTA Terms

As you can see from our table on the left, the Toyota Carina E is indisputably the car in front. It's ahead on build quality and reliability, too. Recent independent surveys from around the world confirm that Toyotas are the most reliable cars on the road.

From £10,670‡ the Carina E also sets the standard on choice. There are saloons, liftbacks and estates with engines ranging from our revolutionary lean burn, 1.6 litre 16-valve to outstandingly economical diesels.

Toyota Terms. The easier way to get in front.

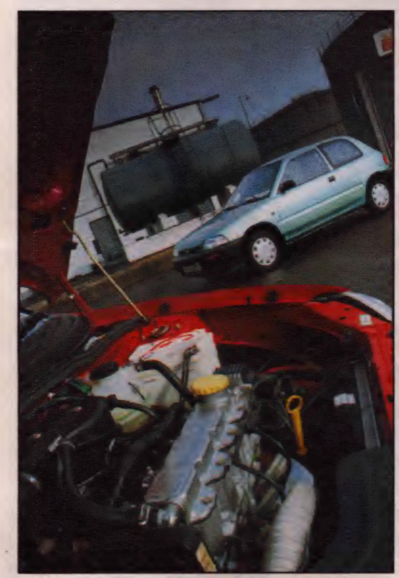
Toyota Terms is an innovative way of getting behind the wheel of the car in front. And from 1st October to 30th November 1993, while stocks last, we're offering extra-special Toyota Terms on the four-door Carina E 1.6 XLi. This means you could be driving a new Carina E for only £146 a month over two years. And when that time's up, you can change to another brand new Toyota. To find out more, call 0800 777555* or pay a visit to your local Toyota dealer. And get the full measure of the Carina E. **THE CARINA E.**

Toyota Carina E XLi 4-door, mileage 10,000 per annum.	
Cash Price (on the road)	£12,638.63
Deposit	£4,423.52
Credit	£8,215.11
Period	24 months
Monthly Payments	£145.22 x 23
Minimum Value/ Final Rental	£6,043.22
APR	8.8%
Charge for credit incl. purchase fee £40	£1,208.17
Total Amount Payable	£13,846.80

THE CAR IN FRONT IS A TOYOTA

ALL AGREEMENTS ARE SUBJECT TO STATUS AND INDEMNITIES MAY BE REQUIRED IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES. FULL WRITTEN QUOTATIONS ARE AVAILABLE ON REQUEST FROM TOYOTA FINANCE, THE QUADRANGLE, REDHILL RH1 1PX. OFFER MADE SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY, AND APPLIES TO NEW CARINA E 1.6 XLi 4-DOOR VEHICLES PURCHASED AND REGISTERED BETWEEN 1ST OCTOBER AND 30TH NOVEMBER 1993. PRICES QUOTED ARE FOR NON-METALLIC CARS. OFFER REDEEMABLE BY TOYOTA DEALERS IN THE UK. OFFER EXCLUDES MOTABILITY SCHEME VEHICLES, VEHICLES SUPPLIED TO ESTABLISHED TOYOTA EFO FLEET CUSTOMERS AND VEHICLES PURCHASED UNDER DIPLOMATIC OR TAX FREE PURCHASE SCHEMES. †OFFICIAL FUEL CONSUMPTION CARINA E XLi 4-DOOR: MPG (LIT/100KM) URBAN CYCLE 35.3 (8.0) CONSTANT 56 MPH 57.6 (4.9) CONSTANT 75 MPH 43.5 (6.7). CALL 0737 768585 FOR TAX FREE/EXPORT SALES. SEE DEALER FOR DETAILS OF OUR 3 YEAR/60,000 MILE WARRANTY. *THE TOYOTA INFORMATION SERVICE IS OPERATED ON BEHALF OF TOYOTA (GB) LTD. MODEL ILLUSTRATED, CARINA E XLi 4-DOOR £12,120. ‡PRICES INCLUDING VAT CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS AND ARE EXCLUSIVE OF NUMBER PLATES, ROAD FUND LICENCE AND DELIVERY CHARGE OF £370 (INC. VAT). THIS EXCLUDES NORTHERN IRELAND.

Although slightly hampered by a cramped footwell, the E-drive's interior is adventurously styled using entertaining shapes



Corsa E-drive, a gutless disappointment

Oddly, the TD's pedals were worse than the E-drive's.

The best driving position is provided by the Charade whose pedals are evenly spaced and the least offset. Both the Corsas and the AX suffer from cramped footwells that have no space for a clutch rest. While the Charade has the most room up front, its rear-seat passengers must put up with the least head and kneeroom.

Luggage space in all these cars is reasonable; the Charade's is smallest.

OWNER APPEAL

EARLY CITROEN AXs had a reputation for flimsy build quality, so the model was given more robust dashboards, switchgear and interior trim. The celebrated bottle-holders remain in the front door panels, adding to the AX's already appealing character.

The Charade, on the other hand, is unlikely to worm its way into your affections. It is a dreary car and has the cheapest-looking interior. It also has an irritating boot lock that can be opened only by a key or by using the internal release mechanism.

That leaves the Corsas: stylish, jazzy and well put together, Vauxhall's baby would be a pleasure to own and use day to day - and would probably remain so two years down the road.

COUNTING THE COST

ALL THESE cars are designed to be cheap to run. Whichever you chose, fuel costs would be wallet-friendly. Most sparing with the motion potion is the AX, which during our test returned 43mpg. The lively Corsa TD managed 40.7mpg, which is all the more admirable when you consider that its wimpish E-drive sibling achieved only 40.5. The Charade trails in last, though with a figure of 37.9mpg, it's hardly a gas-guzzler. Other potentially costly areas are insurance and servicing. Here the E-drive scores its first victory: group 3 insurance and service intervals of just 9000 miles put it in a more comfortable position than the TD, with its group 5 rating and frequent 4500-mile pit-stops. The AX and Charade have identical 6000-mile service intervals and group 4 insurance ratings.

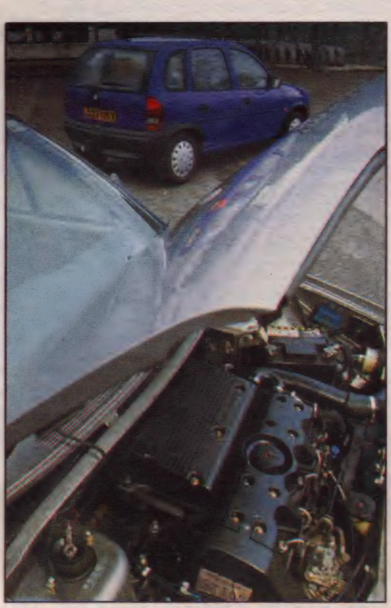
VERDICT

THE CORSA E-drive may share much of the Corsa TD's underpinnings and bear a £1900 price advantage over the diesel, but it is outgunned by all three rivals here. Even if it were available in a trim level higher than Merit, the E-drive sacrifices too much in the name of economy.

The Charade and AX have traded punches throughout the test without either landing a knockout blow. In the end, the Citroën pips the Daihatsu on a points decision, the AX's superior economy, style and fun-to-drive feel beating the over-geared, dull and disappointingly consumptive Daihatsu.

A Corsa may have come last, but Vauxhall's honour is upheld by the Corsa TD which is by far the best car here. Sprightly, frugal, fun to drive and to look at, the TD is one of the best Corsas in the range. Among small economy hatchbacks, it is without equal. Petrol power has some catching up to do.

The AX interior is bland, with lack of space in footwell, but seats are comfortable



AX's motor gets it to 60mph in 18.8sec

Clinton's 80mpg cars

■ How the President plans to shake up the industry

AT THE KWIK FILL petrol station, a mile or so west of Disney World in Orlando, Florida, they've just raised the price of a gallon of petrol to 99 cents. Give or take a penny, that works out at just 65 pence.

At the pumps, Wayne Hicks, a barrel-chested store owner from nearby Daytona Beach, had just tanked-up his six-month-old, V8-engined Lincoln Town Car with 15 gallons of unleaded. It cost him the equivalent of a tenner. Ask Hicks what he thinks about President Bill Clinton's recent decision to get America's 'Big Three' car makers to develop a car that would average 80 to the gallon and he just shrugs his shoulders.

'Hey, Americans don't worry about fuel economy. It's not an issue. Fuel's cheaper than it's ever been. It's cheaper than bottled water. These days it's only the college kids who buy a car because it gets good gas mileage.'

A survey carried out a few weeks ago by the US research company Car Reports, backed him up. It revealed that fuel economy ranked a lowly seventh in a list of 10 reasons why Americans buy a car. Reliability, value-for-money, ride comfort and safety were all rated higher. Hardly surprising when the (inflation-adjusted) price of a gallon of petrol has actually dropped by 50 percent since 1920.

'We already have some highly fuel-efficient vehicles out there for people to buy, but there's no demand,' said David Cole, director of the University of Michigan's Automotive Transportation section. 'This market is totally defined by the consumer. That's why we snap up gas-guzzling muscle cars. It's the reason you see seven-seater mini-vans hauling only a lone driver. And why people buy off-roaders to tackle nothing more demanding than the parking lot at the shopping mall.'

It's for these reasons that President Clinton felt he couldn't rely on the car makers to tackle the fuel economy issue on their own. That's why he's just demanded an undertaking from the high-ups at Ford, General Motors and Chrysler to put their heads together and develop a prototype family car capable of averaging 82.5mpg by the year 2003.

And the emphasis here is on 'family' car. As Vice President Al Gore made clear: 'This won't be a little bitty econo-box that no one will want. We're striving for a family car that's just as comfortable and safe as today's cars. That's the hard part.'

Even harder than you might think. The US gallon is about 20 percent smaller than an imperial gallon, so, in UK terms, Clinton's fuel-efficiency demands rises to around 100mpg.

But with the typical American car only averaging 27.5mpg - and most US family cars struggling to top 20mpg - he is, in effect, calling for a tripling in fuel efficiency.

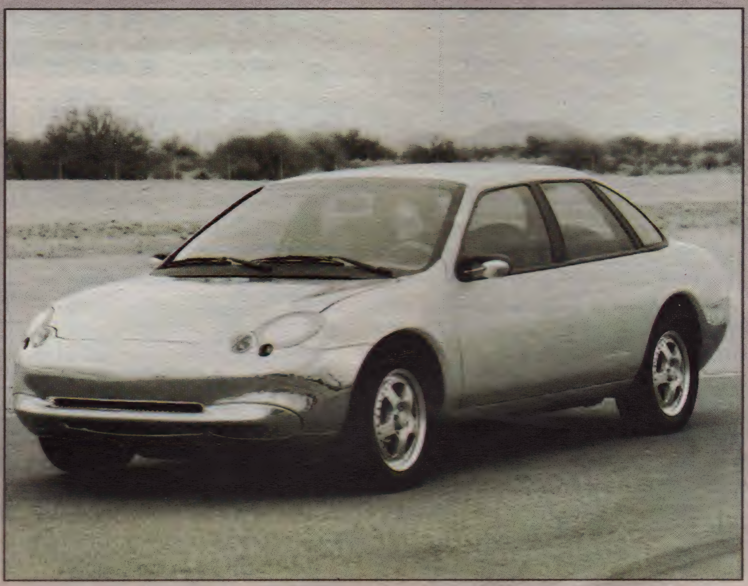
To sweeten the pill, the President told the car chiefs he'd open the doors to the top secret government research labs and the Defence Department 'Star Wars' computers to help speed-up the development.

This decision alone shows his commitment to making cars more economical. His expectations are high, too. At the White House meeting, he even compared the research partnership to the Apollo space project that put a man on the moon. 'We are going to launch a technological adventure as ambitious as any our nation has ever attempted,' he said.

Secretly, the US car makers are decidedly luke-warm about the President's new pet project. While cautiously welcoming the initiative, they also expressed plenty of doubts about whether tripling the country's current automobile fuel average was even possible.

Many industry observers still believe that America's car makers will only build high-economy cars when customers demand them. And that will happen only if car buyers are hit hard where it hurts. In the wallet.

'Double the price of gas to $2 a gallon and I'd be screaming for a car that did 80 to the gallon,' said Wayne Hicks. *Howard Walker*



Powered by 1.2-litre two-stroke, Ford's 'Synthesis 2010' has re-cyclable body

While it's not in the BMW class, the 50 percent stiffer bodyshell does help the handling, and will impress keen drivers. But the added weight blunts the performance. Pretty update of the classic Saab look is largely successful

Saab's charm offensive

The new base 900 will please Saab fans, but the competition is stiff, says Mark Bishop

YOU WILL have read in *Carweek* already that Saab's new 900, which goes on sale in the UK on 20 October, will be powered by a Vauxhall 2.5-litre V6 engine built at Ellesmere Port. But did you know that there are three other engines, all four-pots, and all as Swedish as eggnog and Abba?

A 2.3-litre balancer-shaft unit and a 2.0-litre turbo unit producing 155 and 190bhp go on sale this month and next spring respectively. But the car that concerns us here is the basic, normally aspirated 140bhp 2.0-litre. Not that there's much basic about the standard 2.0S: at £15,995 it has a lengthy specification including electric windows all round, an electric sunroof, heated front seats, anti-lock brakes, probably the best-sounding original-equipment stereo in its class, and even a facility that keeps the headlights on to illuminate your path for 30 seconds after you've parked.

Safety has long been a Saab strong suit: the 9000 has repeatedly been judged the safest car on Swedish roads, and the outgoing 900 was blessed with a passenger cage so strong that, when it went rallying, the authorities ruled there was no need for a roll cage – a theme continued in the new 900, which Saab says exceeds US roll-over standards by 90 percent. In addition to door beams and the driver's airbag (a passenger's is a £350 option), there's three-point rear seatbelts and a stiffer bodyshell.

This reduces body flex and improves suspension control, although the damping leaves something to be desired. Small-bump absorption in town is mediocre; at the opposite end of the scale, yomping down poorly metalled B-roads can make the car pitch and wallow. That aside, the 900 is blessed with a front-drive chassis enthusiast drivers will enjoy; there's even a touch of passive rear steer. Add a communicative, variable-rate steering rack that's well weighted – except about the straight-ahead, where it's a tad too light – and well-controlled torque steer, and Saab's new contender is a distinctive and enjoyable driving experience.

What the 900 chassis lacks, however, is sufficient breadth of abilities to eclipse the best in its class. Peugeot's 405, Ford's Mondeo, Honda's Accord, Rover's 600 and – if you're not fazed by a little pitch-and-dive – Citroën's Xantia, all ride better. The Peugeot and Ford – and even Nissan's increasingly overlooked Primera – acquit themselves with at least as much honour through the twisty bits. BMW's rear-drive 318i – which, at £16,995, isn't that much more expensive than the better-equipped 900 – has a chassis which trumps it by some margin.

Although the 900's rigid bodyshell does its best to insulate passengers from road and engine noise, its valiant efforts are undermined by the engine's vocal struggle to drag along an overly heavy body. At 1285kg, the base 900 weighs as much as its forebear – a car half a class larger, even though the old model's shorter wheelbase made it less roomy.

Tall gear ratios don't help. Fifth gives 24.8mph per 1000rpm, making an 80mph cruise on the flat an effortless affair. It takes only a modest incline or the need to wring out a few extra mph for a briskish overtake, and you must change down. The performance figures say it all – top speed (122mph) is achieved in fourth gear. And the all-important 50-70mph overtaking increment consumes a yawning 11.6sec in fourth and a soporific 17.7 in top.

Luckily the gearbox is a sweet and positive affair (a huge advance over its predecessor's, on which it is based) thanks to the stronger synchromesh and improved selector mechanism. But the perpetual red-lining and changing down that this car demands is out of place in the middle-of-the-road family cruiser it so plainly is.

This is a shame, because the new transverse-mounted 2.0-litre 16v engine – effectively a shorter-stroke version of the 9000's 2.3, less its balancer shafts – is refined and free-revving. If its 133lb ft torque peak

Open road cruising is relaxed, but much gear-swapping is needed to keep speed up

LOVES & HATES

- Excellent dashboard, innovative Black Panel instrumentation, supportive seats
- Overall solidity and advanced safety measures impart sense of well-being
- Distinctive Saab looks and endearing idiosyncracies
- The stereo: user-friendly, thief-resistant and acoustically pleasing

- Lacks bottom-end torque, overgeared for its power/weight ratio
- Poor small-bump absorption
- Steering short on feedback about the straight-ahead

were more evenly spread across the rev range, it would be more than a match for Ford's Zeta and Peugeot-Citroën's XU 2.0-litre, both of which become harsh when extended, and it holds its own against high-tech competitors such as Honda's Accord.

The new 900's interior is its strongest suit. The driving position and seats are excellent, bar a slight shortage of lateral cushioning. The curvaceous, almost BMW-influenced dash is well made and thought out. It includes such neat touches as a uniquely shaped, thief-deterring stereo and a 'Black Panel' night-driving dash. This illuminates only the central speedometer unless the information from another instrument is needed – for instance, if the fuel gauge registers low.

Among the more controversial interior features are the idiosyncracies Saab purists love, chief of which is the ignition mounted on the central console, between handbrake and gearstick. This latter must be placed in reverse before the keys are removed – a cheap but effective anti-theft measure.

You have to feel for Saab. Self-sufficiency is an unattainable dream for small car companies in the 1990s; some measure of component-sharing is inevitable. Given that GM's 50 percent involvement committed Saab engineers to borrowing heavily from the Cavalier/Calibra parts bin, they have come up with a car which remains true to Saab values of safety, and original but practical ergonomics.

Saab's goal was to limit 'borrowed' components to those used beneath the skin; with the exception of an Astra/Cavalier electric mirror switch (train-spotters, please note), it appears to have succeeded. The chassis, too, is quite different in character from its parent Vauxhall's, and its ride character in particular is that of the outgoing 900 writ small.

As a no-pretence family saloon the 2.0S fits the bill; as an aspirant executive it is short on performance and ride aplomb. At £15,995 the 900 will face a tough battle on two fronts. Mainstream contenders such as the Mondeo, 405, Xantia and Accord offer the chassis refinement, performance and sheer service-it-anywhere convenience that the 900 lacks. Upmarket contenders such as BMW's 318i and Rover's 600 are likely to trump it for company car-park cred and, in the German car's case, give it plenty to worry about for performance and driving flair.

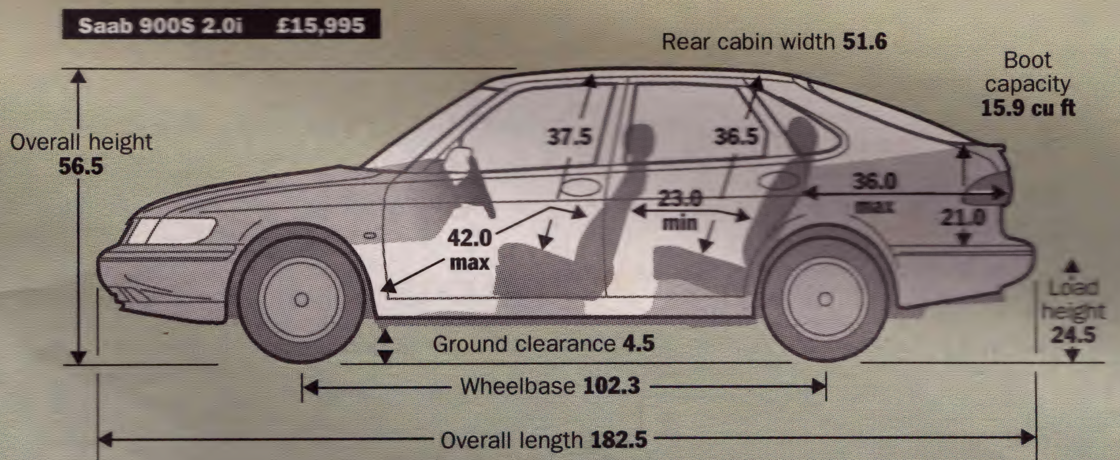
Chassis safety is comprehensive; the loading lip is higher than the first 900's, however

Thoughtful interior is the car's most successful feature; the driving position is first class

SPECIFICATION

ENGINE		
Mounted transversely at front, four cylinders in line		
Capacity	1985cc	
Max power	140bhp at 6100rpm	
Max torque	133lb ft at 4300rpm	
Bore/stroke	90/78	
Compression ratio	10.1:1	
Valvegear	dohc 16v	
Management injection	Bosch Motronic multipoint	
Block/head material	cast-iron/aluminium	
TRANSMISSION		
End-on gearbox, front-wheel drive		
	Ratio	mph/1000rpm
First	3.38	5.2
Second	1.76	9.9
Third	1.12	16.3
Fourth	0.89	19.6
Fifth	0.70	24.8
Reverse	3.17	
Final drive	4.05:1	
SUSPENSION		
Front	Struts, coils, lower wish-bones, anti-roll bar	
Rear	Coils, trailing arms, torsion beam, anti-roll bar	
STEERING		
Rack and pinion, power-assisted		
Turning circle	36.4 ft	
Turns lock-to-lock	3.7	
BRAKES		
Power-assisted, anti-lock system		
Front	Ventilated disc	
Rear	Solid disc	
WHEELS,TYRES		
Wheel size, material	5.5Jx15, steel	
Tyre size, make	185/65 R15 Michelin MXT	
WEIGHT		
Kerb weight	1285kg	
Power-to-weight ratio	109bhp/tonne	
COSTS		
Insurance group	tba	
Warranty	12 months, unlimited mileage.	
Anti-rust/paint	6 years/—	

Service intervals	6000 minor 12,000 intermediate 24,000 major
EQUIPMENT	
Airbag	yes
Alarm/immobiliser	opt
Alloy wheels	opt
Anti-lock brakes	yes
Automatic transmission	opt
Central locking	yes
Electric mirrors	yes
Electric windows	four
Internal boot release	yes
Power steering	yes
Seat belt height adjust	yes
Seat belt tensioners	yes
Seat height/tilt	height
Seat lumbar	no
Side impact bars	yes
Split/fold rear seat	yes
Steering height/reach	reach
Stereo	RDS, 6-speaker
Sunroof	opt



ALL DIMENSIONS IN INCHES

PERFORMANCE

MAXIMUM SPEEDS	mph
Top gear	121
Fourth	122
Third	101 (at 6500rpm limit)
Second	65
First	34

ACCELERATION THROUGH THE GEARS	
mph	sec
0-30	3.3
0-40	5.3
0-50	7.5
0-60	9.9
0-70	13.7
0-80	17.9
0-90	23.0
0-100	30.6
30-70	10.4
Standing quarter mile	17.6/80mph
Standing kilometre	32.1/101mph

ACCELERATION IN THE GEARS sec			
mph	Third	Fourth	Fifth
30-50	8.3	11.2	17.0
40-60	8.3	11.4	17.2
50-70	7.8	11.6	17.7
60-80	8.0	11.8	19.9
70-90	9.3	12.7	—
80-100	12.7	14.4	—

SPEEDOMETER mph	
True	Indicated
30	32
50	52
70	72

Odometer *1.2 percent under-read*

FUEL CONSUMPTION	
Overall test mpg	26.4
Test track mpg	17.6
Touring mpg	32.4
Gov't urban/56/75	25.0/42.8/36.7
Range at touring mpg	486 miles
Tank gallons/litres	15/68.1

RIVALS

PEUGEOT 405 2.0 STi
PRICE £16,880

ENGINE	PERFORMANCE
1998cc in-line four, sohc, fuel injection, 123bhp, 132lb ft	0-60mph in 11.3sec, max 122mph, touring mpg 34.5mpg

Despite recent facelift, the 405 lacks Saab's build quality and ergonomics, but the able chassis more than compensates. Eight-valve engine does not have Saab's refinement at high revs but, because 405 is lighter, it doesn't have to work so hard.

FORD MONDEO 2.0 Si
PRICE £15,800

ENGINE	PERFORMANCE
1988cc in-line four, dohc, fuel injection, 136bhp, 133lb ft	0-60mph in 9.3sec, max 129mph, touring mpg 33.0

Semi-sporty Mondeo flagship retains lesser models' excellent ride quality, though enthusiast drivers will find the chassis tame compared with the 405's. Zeta engine delivers best-in-class performance though gruff top end means few will discover it. Well thought-out interior.

BMW 318I
PRICE £16,995

ENGINE	PERFORMANCE
1796cc in-line four, sohc, fuel injection, 113bhp, 119lb ft	0-60mph in 11.5sec, max 123mph, touring mpg 33.5

Smaller and less well specified than its competitors; more expensive, too, though higher resale values should iron that out. Despite modest power, superlative rear-drive chassis makes it the obvious choice for those who value driving pleasure above gizmos or sheer square footage.

PICK OF THE BUNCH

★ **BMW 318i** ★

As you're driving along, have you ever wondered what might happen to your other half in the event of an accident?

Or, for that matter, what would happen to you?

For instance, would your car give you the extra protection of a driver or passenger airbag?

DSE
DYNAMIC SAFETY ENGINEERING

If you're fortunate enough to be driving a Ford, you would automatically be cushioned by an airbag, since most of our new models currently have one fitted as standard equipment. By the beginning of 1994,* every single car we make will include a driver's airbag.

For a longer lasting relationship, you can provide your partner with an optional passenger airbag for less than the price of an eternity ring.

*Fiesta, Fiesta Van and Courier standard driver's airbag and optional passenger airbag available from January 1994

AIRBAG EQUIPPED

But airbags aren't the only important safety features you'll fall in love with.

Our Dynamic Safety Engineering system (or D.S.E.† for short) is designed to make sure that in the event of an accident, you won't crumple like our crumple zones, absorb an impact like our door beams, or collapse like our steering columns.

In fact, both you and your partner have an extremely strong chance of keeping your romance alive forever.

So next time you're proposing to buy a new car, test drive a Ford and gain an insight into how the other half live. You never know, it could be the start of a very long lasting affair.

Everything we do is driven by you. Ford

production. Driver and passenger airbags not available on Maverick. †Elements of D.S.E may vary by model.

PART ONE JIM CLARK

The last sportsman champion

A superteam in 1967 – Jim Clark with Graham Hill in a season when both drove for Lotus

In the 25 years that Alan Henry has been reporting on motor racing, he has seen many brilliant drivers. In that time, just six have elevated their art to true levels of greatness. Jim Clark was the first

IT WAS JUST AFTER MIDNIGHT on Monday 8 April 1968, that I parked my mother's Morris Minor outside the *Daily Telegraph* building in Fleet Street after the wearisome slog back from Snetterton where I'd just completed my very first club race report for *Autosport*.

During the day, disjointed rumours had been filtering through to the press box at the Norfolk circuit. It was disquieting gossip, but backed up by no certain facts. I sidled up a dark alley where bundles of newspapers were being loaded up for distribution to the London stations.

I rummaged around, scrounged a badly torn copy and paused under a street light to scan the front page.

It was true. Jim Clark was dead. Killed not contesting an epic grand prix on one of the world's classic circuits, but during an inconsequential Formula 2 race on the bland, rain-soaked Hockenheim autodrome in the pine forests near Heidelberg.

A generation later, it's almost impossible to convey the scale of the numbing disbelief generated by Clark's accident, not only in motor-racing circles but in the wider world. His death was front-page news in every national newspaper. At a stroke, all one's comfortable preconceptions and assumptions seemed to have been upended.

Even though motor racing in the 1960s regularly exacted a cruel toll in young lives lost, Jimmy was considered inviolate. 'That fine man' - as his one-time Lotus team-mate Trevor Taylor describes him to this day - was gone. If *he* could be killed, nobody was safe.

This mild-mannered Scottish border farmer was the last of the great sporting grand prix heroes, and his death marked a watershed in contemporary motor racing history.

His competition career began in 1956 at the wheel of a Sunbeam Talbot saloon in local rallies and driving tests through the Berwickshire countryside, close to his family's farm, Edington Mains, near Chirnside. Yet within six years, he rose to be acknowledged as the most brilliantly talented performer of his era.

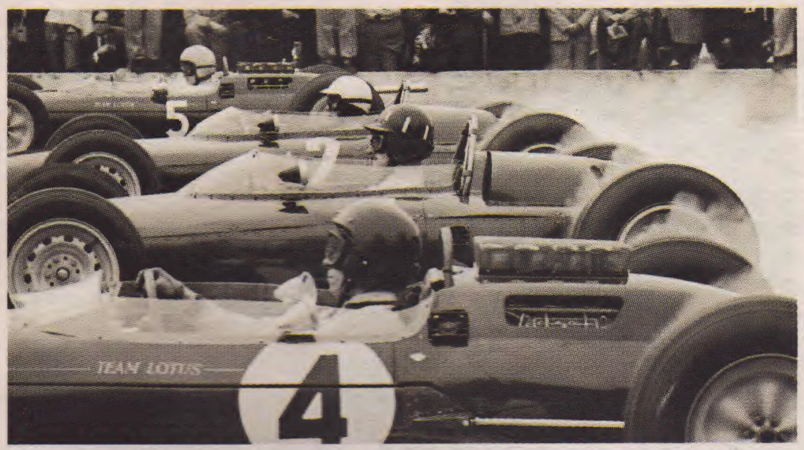
In 1962, armed with the superb Climax V8-engined Lotus 24, Clark took the grand-prix scene by storm. He came within an ace of winning that year's world championship, thwarted only by an engine oil leak in the South African Grand Prix, which handed the title to his BRM-mounted rival Graham Hill, father of today's Williams' F1 star Damon.

Although he won the championship in 1963 and '65 only, he dominated the final four seasons of the 1.5-litre F1 years in a manner equalled only by Alain Prost and Ayrton Senna in the late 1980s.

His boundless versatility earned him victory in the 1965 Indy 500 – having almost won it at his first attempt two years earlier. Almost as an aside, he also racked up countless victories in saloon and sports cars, all achieved in a manner that was at the same time unobtrusive and crushingly decisive.

But Clark never allowed the seductions of fame to rob him of his unassuming, almost shy public face. Herein lay the key to the affection and admiration in which he was held. That such a gentle, dignified man could be such a genius behind the wheel seemed an almost inexplicable contradiction.

To an army of fans he had become a respected role model. He embodied a host of old-fashioned values: dignity, modesty, generosity of spirit. You would have to scratch hard to find



Power game: Clark alongside Hill, Richie Ginther (2) and Trevor Taylor at Oulton in 1963

Clark in the Lotus-Ford 49 in the 1967 Belgian Grand Prix. With Lotus using BRM, Coventry Climax and Cosworth power that season, Clark finished third in the drivers' championship

anybody with a bad word to say about Jimmy Clark.

French journalist Jabby Crombac was one of his closest friends and confidantes. 'I think what made him such a man was his strict, traditional Scottish landowner upbringing,' he says. 'He was an absolute gentleman, totally honest. As a driver his major trait was his speed of reaction and the way in which he got off the line. He had his opposition beaten before the races even started.'

Clark and Colin Chapman enjoyed a personal affinity which bordered on telepathy. They were like brothers. The arrival of the 3.0-litre F1 left Lotus scratching for a new source of engine supply in 1966, but Jim still managed to scrape a victory in the US Grand Prix in the makeweight Lotus 43 with its complex BRM H-16 engine.

In 1967, the Ford-financed Cosworth DFV engine made its debut powering the works Lotus 49s. Clark won four races that summer, although the championship went to Brabham driver Denny Hulme.

Jimmy opened 1968 with a record 25th career victory in the South African Grand Prix at Kyalami, thus beating Fangio's 11-year-old record of 24 wins. Three months later he was dead, and an epic era was suddenly, brutally brought to a close.

Clark had been invited to race a 3.0-litre Ford F3L in the BOAC 1000kms race at Brands Hatch on 7 April, but had to decline owing to a prior commitment at Hockenheim, where he handled the Lotus 48, one of Chapman's least competitive designs.

In the first heat, running through heavy rain, he lost control on a long, curving straight. A marshal saw him wrestling with the car before it plunged into the trees. There were no guard rails in those days, so he never stood a chance.

CLARK
The man who walked from every crash but the last

Grim-faced spectators look down at the wreckage of Jim Clark's car

Headlines reflected the world's shock and grief at Clark's death

The triumphant face of Jim Clark. He won two world championships, but dominated the last four seasons of the 1.5-litre formula in Formula One racing in Colin Chapman's Lotuses

PHOTOGRAPHS: GP LIBRARY

FORMULA 1 CAREER

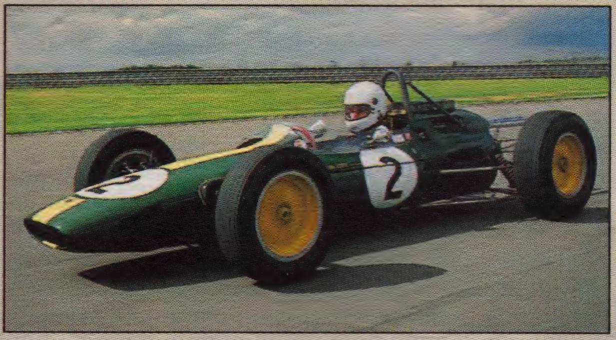
Born: *Fife, Scotland, 4 March 1936*
Died: *Hockenheim, Germany, 7 April 1968*

Races: 72
Wins: 25 (all for Lotus)

1962: Belgian, British, United States
1963: Belgian, Dutch, French, British, Italian, Mexican, South African
1964: Dutch, Belgian, British
1965: South African, Belgian, French, British, Dutch, German
1966: United States
1967: Dutch, British, United States, Mexican
1968: South African

All hands and wrists...

The Lotus 25 gave Jim Clark his first world title. Mark Gillies drives one



If you want an idea of how a single-seat racing car from the early '60s looks, this is it: clean and pure, its lines unsullied by wings, scoops and aerodynamic addenda.

The Lotus 25 is the perfect example of the breed. It's also the car in which Jim Clark won his first world championship in 1963. The beauty of its shape is matched by the engineering: the 25 changed the way in which racing cars were made. It was the first GP car to use a monocoque chassis, instead of the traditional multi-tube spaceframe.

Rigidity is the monocoque's chief advantage. The 25 had a 40 percent more rigid frame than the 1961-vintage 21, yet it weighed 20 percent less. The stiffer the frame, the more supple the suspension can be. The 25 was able to run softer springing than rival cars, which gave it better wheel control and traction.

The 1.5-litre Coventry Climax V8 is mounted behind the driver, as a semi-stressed unit. One of the great F1 engines – it gained 22 wins between 1961-65 – it produced 190bhp in '63 trim. You drive the 25 using your fingertips and wrists, not your elbows and shoulders, trying to keep the car on a precise, geometrical line. The brakes are terrific, although under heavy use at Silverstone, where I drove a 25, it dived steeply. It rides well, too, but the corollary of supple suspension is the unnerving sight of wheels waggling up and down in the bends.

If there's a disappointment, it's the lack of power. The chassis is so good that 190bhp doesn't do it justice. The power to weight ratio is better than a Countach's, but the speed of a 25 wouldn't frighten you – unlike that of most F1 cars, old or new.

Magic motors in moorland

YORKSHIRE CAR COLLECTION

8000 'old' pennies, inspired by Beatles' *Penny Lane*, cover '69 Cooper

Photographs by Charles Best

Geoff Tuley on *Wuthering Heights* with the 1910 Berlin-built NAG 15/30hp K4 Raceabout; these cars were popular in overland competitions

Museums tend not to draw attention to flawed exhibits. The superb Yorkshire Car Collection in Keighley is an exception, because its Ford Galaxie 500 convertible belonged to no less a mega-star than Mick Jagger when he was having an affair with Marianne Faithful. The cut in the hood is reliably reported to have been caused by one of that famously fun-loving lady's stiletto heels.

Geoff Tuley, the collection's 49-year-old general manager, is proof that dreams do come true. Crazy about cars since childhood – his excuse is that his father was a chauffeur – he now presides over more than 200, most of which are in running order. They span almost the entire age of motoring, from the 1890s to the 1980s. Panhard, Gladiator, Minerva and other names from the distant past share the limelight with more recent classics from the likes of Jaguar, Ferrari and Jensen.

'What started off as a restoration project grew to be Britain's biggest private car collection'

Geoff started building his first special when he was a lad of 14. It was followed by such transports of delight as a Jowett Javelin: 'It was one of two that a pal was given by his brother,' he reports. There was a Citröen Light 15, a Borgward Isabella and a Messerschmitt bubble car. The best of the lot, he recalls, was an early Ford Consul in a factory car park.

It was 1971 when Geoff went to work as a textile engineer for a very successful Keighley company. His boss, Peter Black, was a self-made millionaire who had become just a little interested in cars since being told that a hobby would be good for his health. So he paid £30 for a Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost that was rotting in an orchard.

What started as nothing more long-term than a one-off restoration project grew to be Britain's biggest private car collection, opened to the public only last year.

'I became more and more involved, to the extent that it began to conflict with my job at the factory,' says Geoff. '"Would I be interested in working for the collection on a full-time basis?". Well, I thought about it long and hard – for all of 30 seconds, before accepting.'

'There were 98 cars here when Mr Black died in 1977. Most of them dated from not much later than 1930. His sons, Thomas and Gordon, have always been just as keen as their father.

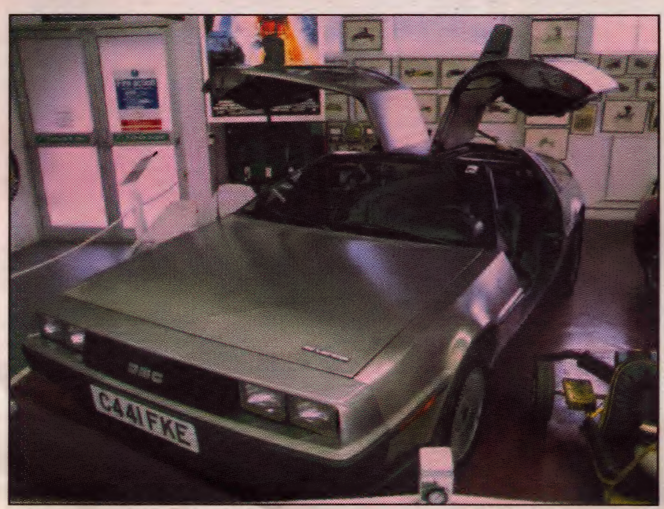
'Thomas did a lot of his training in the USA, so that accounts for the collection having so many American cars. One of the great favourites, which we drive a lot, is a huge 1959 Chrysler Crown Imperial Convertible with pink paintwork and fins six feet long. Previous owners include Led Zeppelin's Robert Plant.'

One of the great things about the Yorkshire Car Collection is that the Black brothers, Geoff Tuley and the rest of the small, close-knit team believe in using the exhibits. They reject the concours d'elegance mentality which results in machines that were built for the open road never being subjected to anything more appropriate than a gentle polish. So veterans and classics alike are used for all manner of events, from local carnivals and galas to such international showpieces as the annual London to Brighton run.

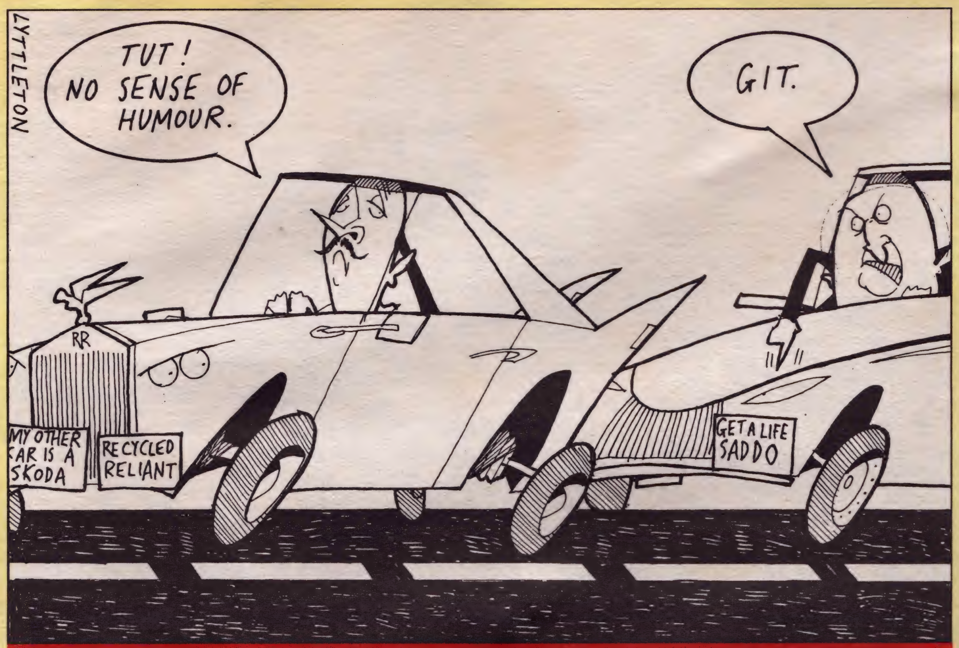
Geoff's personal favourites range from the 1955 Mercedes 300SL with gullwing doors to the 1912 NAG that was driven by James Fox in *Those Magnificent Men In Their Flying Machines*. Built in Germany, this two-seater has all the luxury of an SAS training camp. There is nothing as wimpish as a windscreen. This did not deter Geoff and his wife, June, from covering 2030 miles in a fortnight during the Great British Film Rally in 1990.

'A lot of people think that having all these cars to play with must be wonderful. It is, of course, but there are always problems to be tackled as well. Running the collection keeps me busy 25 hours a day and eight days a week. It has taken my life over . . . and I don't mind a bit!' *Phil Llewellin*

Pop-star paradise: 6.5-litre Chrysler Imperial with power-everything, has TV roles in Heartbeat and Taggart



'83 DeLorean spent time in Saudi; disappointing to drive, says Tuley



WHY I HATE

WITTY CAR STICKERS

Does anyone know how windsurfers 'do' it? Or glider pilots, or young farmers, or anglers? Frankly I don't give a damn how, where or, indeed, if these various enthusiasts do it at all, provided they don't choose to inform me of their grubby proclivities by way of a 'witty' car sticker.

And while my fellow motorists are about it, maybe they could refrain from their attempts to entertain me with the news that the tatty Escort in front of me is a 'Re-cycled Ferrari'. It isn't. I didn't laugh the first time I saw it and I'm sure as hell not going to laugh now, on the five thousandth. Nor does the fact that the car in front of me might be 'Slow, but it's in front of you and it's paid for', raise a chuckle. Heard the about the car that's 'Constipated? It hasn't passed a thing in weeks'. Laugh? No I didn't either.

And why any female driver of virtuous character should confess to being an 'Ex-nurse, ex-nymphomaniac' is beyond me. In fact, why these boneheads think that they're being in any way amusing by spoiling an otherwise perfectly good car with a fatuous sticker is a question that has me puzzled for hours on end. If the car you drive is a statement about yourself, then the kind of statement that a car with a witty sticker sends out is that right here in front of you, is the one person it would be worth jumping overboard and swimming through 50 miles of shark-infested sea, rather than being stuck with in a lifeboat.

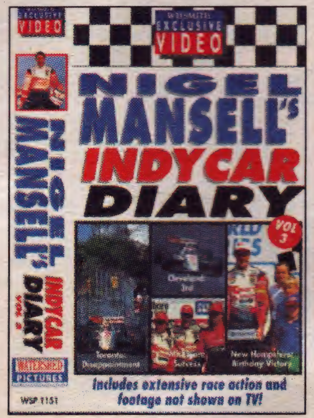
The pathetic side to this hand-me-down humour, is that wit, to exist at all, ought to be original, and it ought to be delivered at exactly the right moment. To pay someone else to think up something amusing on sticky-backed plastic is like paying someone to make love to your wife. If you can't think of anything funny, that's fine. Humour and comedy are hard disciplines. But don't, unless you want to earn the contempt of all right-thinking citizens, slap the same nugget of repartee on your boot as 30,000 other Sierra drivers.

And if there's anything worse than a non-witty witty sticker, it's one that misses the point altogether. I saw the other day that 'Blood donors do it twice a year'. Poor sods. Maybe it's the lack of red blood cells. *Nick Swallow*

REVIEW

Nigel Mansell's Indycar Diary

Volume 3 *WH Smith £12.99*

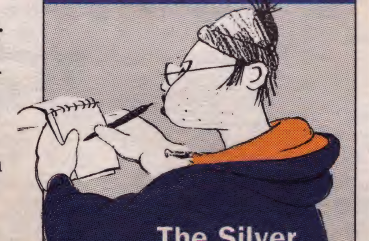


The key word here is 'diary'. You know how diaries have a tendency to ramble on and on, submerge pertinent detail in a sea of indulgent drivel, waste time on tedious minutiae and despite all of this, still provide a fascinating insight into the psyche of the subject? Well, volume 3 of Nige's Indy year conforms to type. Except the bit about being fascinating. Even basking in the sweaty glow of our man's heroic, championship-clinching drive at Nazareth, this video is as riveting as a bowl of cat food. Being excessively long is the nature of the beast. Culled from Channel Four's extensive coverage of rookie Mansell's phenomenal endeavours in the Newman/Haas Lola Ford, the blurb proudly boasts of 'footage not shown on TV!' Naturally. If you're going to make the highlights of just four races – Cleveland, Toronto, Michigan and Loudon – stretch to 90 minutes, you do your research on the cutting room floor.

It's where all of Mansell's cloyingly matey but still maddeningly monotonous monologues straight to camera should have stayed. Especially the one where he congratulates bosom buddy Greg Norman on winning the British Open and commiserates with good ol' Nick Faldo. Pardon us for intruding.

There are some good bits: Red Five's titanic struggle with Emerson Fittipaldi at Cleveland and an almost unbelievable dice with Paul Tracy at Loudon. Narrator Nicky Horne's script does not miss a trick. 'Wastegate problem the cause, no points the effect.' Nice line. Pity about the film. *David Vivian*

ANORAKSIA



The Silver Shadow was the first Rolls-Royce to make a profit for the company for 50 years.

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Volvo estate drivers could have last laugh as Swedes plan BTCC bid

Volvo wagon training

BY MARK FOGARTY

ANDY CHRISTODOLO

Boxing clever: 850 Estate may lift up its skirts and fly if the brick-like styling and weight doesn't kill it

INTERNATIONAL school run champion Volvo is on the verge of announcing its return to touring car racing. Swedish sources are convinced Volvo has contracted TWR to run a two-car, factory-backed team in next year's British Touring Car Championship.

It is likely the Anglo-Swedish alliance will field the 850 model, which Volvo is trying to promote as a sporty saloon. However, there are suggestions that Volvo and TWR believe the smaller 400 series would be more competitive – and also in greater need of image-enhancement.

An even more outlandish – and remote – possibility is that Volvo will go for a publicity coup by opting to race 850 Estates! *Carweek* understands that racing the carry-all version of the front-wheel-drive 850 was discussed by Volvo's management in Gothenburg. Apparently, the company's marketing mavins are smitten with the publicity possibilities of the Estate mixing it with saloons on the track.

In fact, an informant swears that the proposal has gone further than the 'what-if' stage. He claims a Swedish executive of Volvo UK let slip that not only had the BTCC programme been approved, but that running 850 Estates was being given serious consideration.

'This bloke from Volvo told me "We want to show a Volvo estate can handle like the equivalent sedan",' our source said.

Estates are eligible under the 2.0-litre Class 2 rules, which stipulate only a minimum length and a requirement for the vehicle on which homologation is based to have four doors. However, the 850 Estate's potential as a competitive racer could be restricted by its weight distribution and aerodynamics.

Volvo in Sweden is the driving force behind the move to race the 850. However, its British subsidiary admits it supports the initiative. 'From a UK point of view, we'd be very much behind it,' said Volvo UK spokesman Roger Ormisher. 'As a marketing opportunity, it would help change the image of the marque, particularly to emphasise the driver enjoyment of the 850.'

Volvo's impending comeback with TWR (Tom Walkinshaw Racing) unites former touring car foes. TWR-run Rover 3500s and works Volvo 240 Turbos fought out the now-defunct European Touring Car Championship in the mid-1980s. Volvo withdrew from racing after winning the Euro-title under an eligibility cloud in '86.

ANDRETTI SENIOR TO QUIT

Indycar legend Mario Andretti has confirmed that he will retire for good at the end of next season, leaving him one final stab at scoring a second victory in the Indianapolis 500. The 53-year-old from Nazareth, Pennsylvania, will complete his testimonial year alongside Nigel Mansell in the Newman-Haas team. Andretti, four-times Indycar champion, also won the 1978 world championship at the wheel of a Lotus-Ford. He scored his sole Indy 500 victory in 1969, and his maiden F1 victory following two years later at the wheel of a Ferrari in South Africa.

FOOTWORK LOSES GRIP ON SPONSORSHIP

The Footwork grand prix team is braced to take a major cut in sponsorship – from the very Japanese company that owns the team. Millionaire Wataru Ohashi, whose Footwork transportation conglomerate has bankrolled the team for the past three years, is scaling down his financial backing. The cars will continue to be known as Footworks, but the Milton Keynes-based team is on the look-out for a major new sponsor to help it replace the Mugen-Honda V10s it is losing to Lotus with Ford-Cosworth V8s for next year.

BOURNE WILL NOT BE PLAYING POSSUM

New Zealander Possum Bourne (left), a 555 Subaru team driver, will continue to compete despite the death of his compatriot co-driver and friend, Rodger Freeth, on the Rally Australia last month. Bourne's new navigator is fellow Kiwi Tony Sircombe, who worked for Prodrive in team administration before joining Rod Millen's Mazda programme in the Asia-Pacific championship as co-driver/co-ordinator. Millen and Sircombe were AP champions in 1989. The first time Bourne will be partnered by 33-year-old Sircombe is on the non-championship 555-sponsored Hong Kong-Peking Rally.

ALAN HENRY

'Worthy though Mansell is, his aptitude for Indycar racing is not the equivalent of the Second Coming'

NOW THAT the hysteria surrounding Nigel Mansell's Indycar conquest has abated, we can take a reasoned look at this remarkable achievement and place it in its correct historical context. Worthy though Mansell is, his aptitude for Indycar racing is by no means the motor racing equivalent of the Second Coming.

Just as he won the F1 world championship by doing a first-rate job in the overwhelmingly competitive Williams-Renault, so he climbed aboard Indycar's equivalent – the Newman-Haas team's Lola-Ford – and delivered much the same result.

I don't doubt the likes of Paul Tracy, Al Unser Jnr and Robbie Gordon are tremendous talents. But the fact that charismatic stars like Emerson Fittipaldi and Mario Andretti – veterans of F1 two decades ago – are still pitching in with a chance tells you in which formula the cutting edge is sharpest.

Moreover, Mansell's immediate mastery of a different driving discipline is a message that touring car drivers need to take on board before 31 October, when he bounds into their balliwick at Donington Park to drive a Ford Mondeo in the TOCA Shoot-Out. It will be his first racing appearance at home since his orgy of adulation at last year's British Grand Prix.

It was with a degree of incredulity – not to mention amusement – that I read John Cleland's assertion (*Carweek*, 15 September) that if Mansell wins, it proves nothing – but if he loses, then he's 'a tosser'.

On the contrary, I think it's the tin-top boys who have everything to lose. There is a lofty assumption that their calling is an unusually specialised area which requires a particular touch. This view is perhaps enhanced by the failure of former F1-er Jonathan Palmer to rattle the touring car cage a couple of seasons back. But with respect to the good Dr Palmer, he is not Nigel Mansell. I would go so far as to say that as a grand prix driver, Palmer makes a great F1 TV analyst. Similarly, I seem to recall that as a commentator, Mansell makes a great driver.

But I digress. Getting back to Cleland's comment, he would also have been well-advised to consult the history books before venturing such a controversial opinion. He has clearly forgotten how aggressive Aussie Alan Jones chewed up and spat out the tin-top regulars in about two corners at Donington when he guest drove a Rover 3500 soon after clinching the 1980 F1 title for Williams.

I suspect Mansell's real motivation behind driving the Ford is not his undoubtedly fat fee, but a belief that his presence will attract more spectators to Donington than the Grand Prix of Europe did at Easter.

So what will it all prove? If the truth be told, it will only reinforce the obvious conclusion to be drawn from Mansell's mauling of Indycar's oval specialists. Drivers bred in F1 are in a different league and the BTCC bunch are about to be put in their place by 'Our Noige'.

Namely – and to borrow from John Cleland's beguiling vocabulary – that it is they who'll be the 'tossers'.

13 rallies – unlucky for some

THE GENERAL Assembly of the FIA is expected to confirm on Friday that the proposed 15-rally rotation system is to be cut to 13 events, of which only 10 will be full world championship qualifiers next year.

Sweden, Australia and Catalunya (Spain) have already been warned they are out of the WRC for '94, qualifying only for the second-division FIA Formula 2 Cup. Thereafter, they will alternate with other world title rallies.

Delegates are, however, likely to defer a decision on future rally formulae changes in the absence of detailed alternative proposals from the World Motor Sport Council's specialist committees. But fears that the FIA is about to announce the execution date for the existing – and successful – four-wheel drive, turbocharged cars at the end of '97 have not receded. This may be actioned by the WMSC in December.

The WMSC is also likely to consider a controversial expansion of TV controls beyond the world championship rallies, together with a proposal that EC licence-holders can have complete freedom to compete within the Community. Martin Holmes

Carweek COMPETITION: YOUR CHANCE TO BE DAMON HILL FOR A DAY AT SILVERSTONE

Carweek is offering 25 drives at a specially organised day at Silverstone with the John Watson Performance Driving Centre on Monday 8 November 1993. The lucky winners of this competition, worth £175, will have a fun-filled day designed to test their driving skills to the full. The activities include:

- **Instruction in a Formula Ford single-seater**
- **Sideways with style on the skid pan**
- **Autotest in a 170bhp Caterham Seven**
- **High-speed rides in a racing Peugeot 309 GTi**
- **Head to head kart racing**
- **Wheel-changing competition**

Entry is open only to those aged 18 and over. Simply answer the two questions below, and a further two questions that will appear with the entry coupon in next week's issue (on sale 20 October). The first 25 correct answers out of the hat will win.

QUESTION 1. Who is the 1993 Indycar World Champion?
QUESTION 2. Who is the 1993 Formula One World Champion?

John Watson Performance Driving Centre Silverstone

PREVIEW FIA TOURING CAR CHALLENGE ■ 49 drivers from 14 countries ■ Mercedes race boss says the Brits will win

The British are coming

TIM ANDREW

BMW, Primera, Cavalier, Mondeo, Xedos: the BTCC cars are reckoned the quickest 2.0-litres in the world

BY MARK FOGARTY

MERCEDES-BENZ Motorsport boss Norbert Haug predicts that the powerful British team will dominate the inaugural FIA Touring Car Challenge at Monza, near Milan, on Sunday.

The inter-nation event is the unofficial world championship of British-style 2.0-litre touring car racing for countries and drivers.

'In my opinion, it will just be an extension of the BTCC,' said Haug, who regards Britain as the centre of international 2.0-litre touring car competition. 'The best competition, the best cars, the best drivers are there.'

Mercedes will be the only major manufacturer involved in top-level touring car racing not represented at Monza. Mercedes champions Germany's 2.5-litre Class 1 category, a high-cost, high-technology formula.

Although he openly prefers Class 1, Haug is an astute observer of Class 2 racing in Italy, France and Britain. He is also under pressure from Mercedes UK and other Stuttgart subsidiaries to develop a Class 2 version of the C-class 'baby Benz'.

But while Haug is backing the Brits in the Monza jamboree, the man who masterminded Mercedes' defeat in this year's German touring car championship, Alfa Romeo competition chief Giorgio Pianta, believes the competition will be close.

'I think all cars will be compatible,' said Pianta, whose Alfa Corse operation is preparing six Alfa 155TSs for the FIA Touring Car Challenge.

However, many touring car observers expect plenty of pre-race wrangling over the Class 2 regulations. In their national series, the French and Italians are more liberal than the Brits in their interpretation of the rules, particularly those covering bodywork.

Eligibility arguments are inevitable, even though the FIA has already warned teams that its own, independent scrutineers will be enforcing the strict letter of the rules.

Alfa Romeo is among 11 makes entered at Monza. The others are BMW – the most widely represented marque with 14 cars – Peugeot (six cars), Nissan, Opel and Toyota (four each), Audi (three), Ford and Vauxhall (two each), and Mazda and Renault (solo entries).

The international entry consists of 49 drivers from 14 countries. The biggest contingents are from Britain, Italy and France, each with the maximum eight cars, and Germany (six).

The British line-up is Steve Soper in his Schnitzer BMW, John Cleland and David Leslie in their Vauxhall Cavaliers, Will Hoy and Julian Bailey in the TOM'S Toyotas, Andy Rouse (Ford Mondeo), Kieth O'dor (Nissan Primera) and Robb Gravett (Peugeot 405).

The team was selected by the RAC Motor Sports Association on the basis of the top five British passport-holding drivers in the BTCC points at the end of August – Soper, Cleland, O'dor, Bailey and Hoy – plus 'wild cards' Leslie, Gravett and Rouse, who were chosen on their late-season form.

Managing the team at Monza is Toca boss Alan Gow, who is bullish about the Bulldogs' chances. 'We're the favourites,' Gow declared. 'We have a very strong line-up and we've been racing 2.0-litre cars longer than anyone else. But it's not going to be easy. It's going to be difficult from the word go.

'I'd go so far as to say that it'll be the most difficult event anyone in our team has ever done. We're racing in a foreign country against new opposition which has a different interpretation of the rules. But the end result is going to be worth it because we'll win!'

Gow's confidence that the FIA Touring Car Challenge trophy is bound for Britain stems from his belief that the Class 2 rules will be properly policed. 'The British cars are the quickest 2.0-litre cars in the world – providing everyone's racing to the same rules. If the cars are equal, ours are quicker.'

Foreign drivers in British-built cars are Australia's Mark Skaife in a Janspeed Nissan, New Zealander Paul Radisich in his Mondeo, Switzerland's Alain Menu in his Renault 19 and Swede Slim Borgudd in Patrick Watts' Mazda Xedos 6.

Other notables are Germany's Joachim Winkelhock in his BTCC-winning BMW, Peugeot Talbot Sport boss Jean-Pierre Jabouille in a French 405, and German touring car champion Nicola Larini and his also ex-F1 Alfa team-mate Alessandro Nannini.

The FIA Touring Car Challenge will be decided over two 30-minute races - separated by a 10-minute interval - around the historic 3.6-mile Monza course.

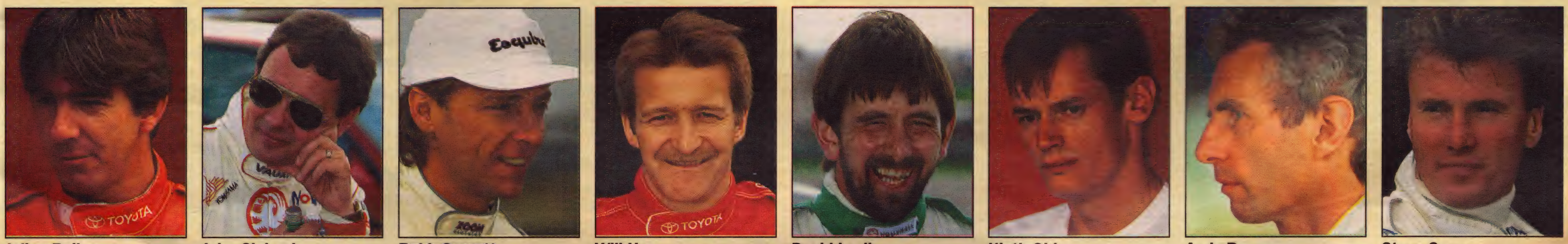
The winning nation will be decided on points, for which a maximum of five drivers from each country are eligible. For example, five of the eight British drivers will have to be nominated as our official national team before scrutineering at Monza on Friday. The best three of the quintet will score points in the two races.

But all drivers are eligible for the title of FIA Touring Car Champion, to be awarded to the driver who scores the best results in both events.

Satellite TV channel Eurosport is planning live coverage of the FIA Touring Car Challenge on Sunday afternoon. Check your local listings.

Inside Will Hoy's Toyota, which he hopes will be the car in front come Sunday at the legendary Autodromo

THE FLYING SQUAD



Julian Bailey | John Cleland | Robb Gravett | Will Hoy | David Leslie | Kieth O'dor | Andy Rouse | Steve Soper

PHOTOGRAPHS BY COLIN MCMASTER

THE YOUNG GUNS

Burt warms his tyres for F1

BY PHILLIP THOMAS

KELVIN BURT clinched the British Formula Three championship, two days before his 26th birthday, with his seventh win of the season. As the first Briton to take the nation's premier single-seater category since Johnny Herbert in 1987, he is on the path which has launched so many British champions into F1.

Although the title was decided with two races remaining, Burt's season was not one of simple domination. Indeed, some of the Tamworth driver's best performances came when his car was outclassed: either by the works Vauxhall engine used by Oliver Gavin (who took five wins), or before his out-paced Reynard chassis was swapped for the all-conquering Dallara. In spite of these difficulties, Burt always brought his Paul Stewart Racing car home in the points.

After doing some karting at a local track while at school, Burt began Formula Ford, when he was 21, in 1988. 'My parents are enthusiastic now, but when I started I didn't have their help, and I floundered a bit. That's why there was a big gap between karts and cars.'

Just after Burt won the 1991 British Formula Vauxhall Championship in dominant fashion, a survey showed most of his rivals thought him too laid-back. A better description came just after Kelvin clinched his F3 crown: 'He's such a cunning little street-fighter,' a rival team boss said after watching him race.

Burt has always been able to out-pace rivals, but this year he's also learned to out-think them.

'Andy Miller (PSR team boss) is my type of person – phlegmatic,' Burt explained. 'Between us, we were pretty cool and never got ruffled. Andy has forced me to concentrate in testing.'

Number one car, number one driver. Burt always finished in the points

Burt's on-track decisions have been outstanding: slowing the pace while leading so his rivals fight among themselves, or pointing out a yellow flag to an overtaking driver, causing him to drop back and leave Burt free to pursue the front-runners.

'I have a good brain for racing. I think clearly and enjoy wheel-to-whee situations.'

Although the championship is decided, Burt knows more work is required before F1's doors will open. After wrapping up the series he was off for a couple of meetings at the Portuguese GP, 'just to show my face'.

'Unless I get a nice surprise, I will probably do F3000 with PSR next year,' he said.

Apart from finishing the British season, Burt will test a PSR F3000 car, and test with Williams in December – a prize for winning the championship. He will also race at the invitation Macau and Fuji F3 races against the world's best young drivers. 'I'm looking forward to that,' he said.

Burt enjoys his laid-back image

BRITISH FORMULA 3 CHAMPIONS 1983–93

Champion		Other Notables
1983	Ayrton Senna (BR)	Martin Brundle
1984	Johnny Dumfries	
1985	Maurizio Gugelmin (BR)	
1986	Andy Wallace	Martin Donnelly
1987	Johnny Herbert	Bertrand Gachot (B), Mark Blundell
1988	JJ Lehto (SF)	Damon Hill
1989	David Brabham (AUS)	
1990	Mika Hakkinen (SF)	Christian Fittipaldi (BR)
1991	Rubens Barrichello (BR)	
1992	Gil de Ferran (BR)	
1993	Kelvin Burt (GB)	

A special stage in his career

BY MARTIN HOLMES

RICHARD BURNS, at 22 the youngest driver to win the British Rally Championship, was back home from his Manx triumph, trying to take it all in.

'I've always dreamed,' he said. 'But I never thought I would have achieved so much in rallying so soon.' Obviously my arrival at Prodrive gave me the chance of a competitive car for the *Top Gear*/Mobil 1 series,' said the Reading driver. 'But I had been lucky well before that.'

Richard first competed in a rally in 1988, aged 17. He was a member of the local Craven Motor Club, where he got to know David Williams, now head of a conference-organising company called Genesis. Burns pestered Williams for help, and fondly remembers the first time he gave in. 'David let me have a set of tyres for my Talbot Sunbeam, on the Severn Valley stages rally.'

The Peugeot Challenge was the foundation for Burns' early experience. 'They gave me the chance to enter the sort of rallies I needed to know about. The Ulster Rally was the only one this year that was new to me. My other big chance was to have a really reliable car to run.

'It would be unrealistic for me to think that I will be invited to drive in the world championship team, especially at such a critical time as next year, when they will have their new car. I'll be happy to continue in the British series, and have the chance to keep in touch with the WRC scene by testing the Impreza.'

Next stop for Burns will be the Network Q RAC Rally, driving a Legacy for the Prodrive B-team, while the world championship A-team are in Imprezas.

Meanwhile, Subaru will finalise its world championship rally programme during next week's Tokyo Motor Show.

The next Colin McRae? Burns is also a winner in a Subaru Legacy

The champ: sticking with Subaru

MAURICE SELDON

Carweek So far, so good?

We'd like to know what you think about CARWEEK. Is it so far, so good? Or so far, only so so? Your answers, which will be treated in absolute confidence of course, will help the editorial team produce more of what you like, and less of what you don't like.

We will be sufficiently grateful for your contribution that one reader drawn out of the hat will be invited to join our road test team, as they drive and photograph a new – and, naturally, interesting – car.

Incidentally, if you don't want to cut your CARWEEK, send us a photocopy.

Many thanks.

Gavin Green, Editor-in-Chief.

Q1. WHY DID YOU BUY THIS ISSUE OF CARWEEK?

I bought it for the free Motor Show Guide. ☐

I've read it before. ☐

I saw it advertised ☐

Q2. WHICH ISSUES OF CARWEEK HAVE YOU BOUGHT?

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐

Q3. HOW INTERESTING DO YOU FIND THE VARIOUS PARTS OF CARWEEK?

Section 1 White pages	Ref. in this issue	VERY	FAIRLY	NOT VERY	NOT AT ALL	DON'T READ
News	2-7					
First Drives	10-12					
Peter Dron, The Ferret	14-15					
One Car Road Tests	16-19					
Mike Rutherford's Articles	22-23					
Group Tests	28-33					
Wheel Life	40-41					
Sport	43-46					
All the White Pages						
Section 2 Pink Pages						
New Car Listings	11 Onwards					
Used Car Prices	ALL					
News on Running Cars	2-3					
Buyers Guide	4-7					
Long Term Tests	8					
Ask Claire Evans	9					
All the Pink Pages						

Q4. WHAT DO YOU ALSO READ AND/OR BUY?

WEEKLIES	Buy regularly nowadays (At least every other issue)	Read sometimes (In last 3 months)	Used to buy, but now buy CARWEEK	Still buy as well as CARWEEK
Autocar & Motor				
Auto Express				
Motoring News				
Autosport				
MONTHLIES				
What Car?				
Car				
Performance Car				
Car Choice				
Fast Lane				
Top Gear				
Motor Sport				
Auto Trader				
Exchange & Mart				

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WH Smith ☐ John Menzies ☐

Martins ☐ Other big newsagent ☐

Local Newsagent ☐ Supermarket ☐

Other ________

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IF YES, WAS IT BECAUSE . . .

Newsagent had sold out ☐

Newsagent didn't have any copies ☐

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Somewhere else ________

ABOUT YOU

Q8. HOW OLD ARE YOU?

Under 15 ☐ 15-19 ☐ 20-24 ☐ 25-34 ☐

35-44 ☐ 45-64 ☐ 65+ ☐

Q9. SEX?

Male ☐ Female ☐

Q10. ARE YOU?

Working full time ☐

Working part time ☐

Unemployed ☐

In full time education ☐

Retired ☐

Q11. WHAT IS YOUR OCCUPATION?

Please write in ________

Name ________

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Would you be prepared to take part in any future research for CARWEEK?

YES ☐ NO ☐

Many thanks for your help. To reassure you, all this information is strictly confidential.

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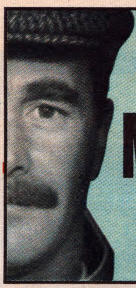


HOW MANSELL GOT ON

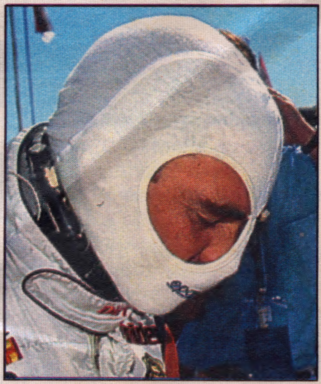
BY HOWARD WALKER

THEY HAVE karaoke every Saturday night at the Varsity. It's a sports bar in Clearwater, a couple of miles or so from the waterfront mansion that Nigel Mansell calls home. It's rough and rowdy, a place where affluence is measured by whether or not you have hubcaps on your pick-up truck.

The Varsity, though, is the place in Clearwater to watch sport. A dozen TV monitors dangle precariously from the ceiling around the bar. In the four corners there are giant projection TV sets. Today is the climax of the Indycar championship. The final showdown in Monterey. The shaker in Laguna Seca. A chance for Mansell, Clearwater's new local hero, to snatch another win.

Surely the Varsity is the place where Mansell-mania would be at fever pitch? Where the cheers for Red Five would raise the roof?

'Who do ya say Nigel Mansell was again?' asked Ray, the guy in charge of the TV control buttons. 'Can't say I've heard of him. Is he one of them golfing fellas?'



Who was that masked man?

When I suggested that he might like to switch channels to see Nigel in action, he flashed a look of discombobulated disbelief.

'We got the Braves playin' the Rockies and the White Sox up against the Indians,' Ray replied. 'The Bucs are playin' the Lions at baseball. No way we're gonna miss those.' Fact is, American sports fans couldn't care less about Indycar racing. Or Nigel Mansell. Football, baseball and basketball are the only gods.

While the 'Nige Wins' headlines are splashed on the back pages of every British tabloid following a Mansell victory, the American press devotes no more than a handful of paragraphs to the race. NASCAR stock cars usually get twice the lineage.

'Indycar racing is not major league,' said Gary Shelton, sports columnist with the *St Petersburg Times*, Mansell's local paper. 'It's a minority interest.'

And while Mansell appears to be doing very nicely with the estimated $5 million salary he picks up from Newman/Haas, his pay slip pales into insignificance compared with the mega salaries being handed out to America's top sportsmen.

A week ago, 24-year-old Larry Johnson signed a deal with the Charlotte Hornets basketball team that will net him a staggering $84 million over 12 years.

That may give Mansell something to ponder while he's negotiating his British saloon car drive at Donington on 31 October.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRYN WILLIAMS

Damon Hill vows that he won't be intimidated by Ayrton Senna

BRING HIM ON!

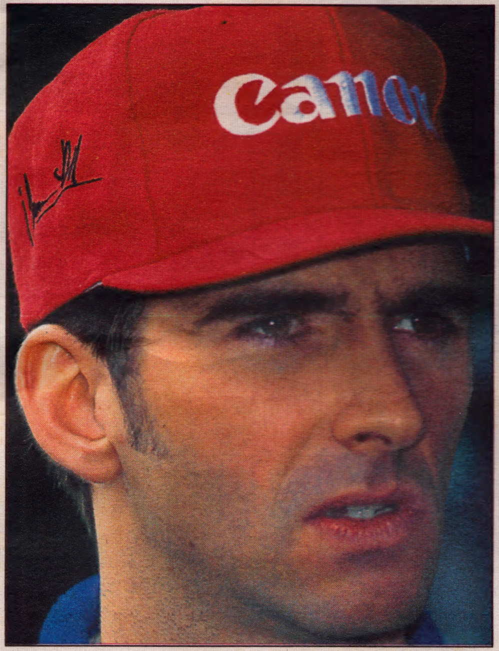
BY ALAN HENRY

A DETERMINED Damon Hill is revelling in the prospect of the biggest challenge of his racing career following confirmation on Monday that he will partner triple world champion Ayrton Senna in the Rothmans-Williams Renault team next year.

The laid-back Londoner is confident he can defend his corner in what promises to be an electrifying confrontation with the man he acknowledges is probably the world's top driver.

'I haven't got any objection to Ayrton joining me at Williams,' said Hill in an oblique tongue-in-cheek reference to Alain Prost's reluctance to drive alongside the Brazilian ace. 'Seriously, though, I think it's going to be a momumental challenge to compete against the guy. But I really welcome it. If you're going to race in F1, you might as well get stuck in at the very top.

'Clearly, Ayrton is highly motivated and in some areas he is even stronger than Alain. Having said that, I'm very confident and excited. After all, even Nigel [Mansell] was never paired alongside Ayrton.'



Hill: no objections to Senna joining him at Williams

Senna: no objections to Hill remaining at Williams

The much-anticipated official announcement of grand prix racing's new super-team was made by Frank Williams at his Didcot headquarters, confirming last week's story in *Carweek*, which provoked a flurry of follow-up reports by a clearly ruffled Fleet Street brigade.

'In 1994 we need a team to defend the championships we have won this year,' Williams said. 'Alain Prost's retirement left us with a dilemma. He is a driver of immense talent who contributed so much to the team, both in and out of the car. Therefore his most appropriate replacement could only be Ayrton Senna. The Williams team has always admired him and we feel his record speaks for itself.'

Williams was generous in his praise for Hill, who remains on the team strength for a second successive year. 'He has surpassed all our expectations and we are confident he has still more to deliver.'

The normally tactiturn Senna, who first experienced F1 power when he tested a Williams-Ford 10 years ago, said that joining the team was a dream come true.

'Frank is the man who gave me my first opportunity to drive an F1 car, and with a Renault engine I won my first grand prix,' Senna said, referring to his 1985 Portuguese Grand Prix victory for Lotus.

'We have been so close to doing the deal in the past and this year we finally made it. I am really looking forward to what I consider the beginning of a new life in motor racing for me.'

It is expected that Scot David Coulthard, 22, will expand his recent role as Williams's test and reserve driver – the role that eventually won Hill his ride this year as Mansell's replacement.

It's the F1 funny farm

BACK-TO-FRONT starting positions is the most outlandish of several wild ideas being tossed around by the FIA Formula One Commission in a bid to put the spice back into F1 racing.

Reverse grids, among other radical concepts, may be debated at this week's meeting of the FIA World Motor Sport Council, which convenes in Paris today (Wednesday). The idea will meet strenuous opposition from top teams who regard it as a cheap stunt.

The suggestion is that points will be awarded for grid positions as well as race results – but then the cars would start in reverse order. Drivers would have to decide whether to sacrifice qualifying points by sandbagging for a better grid position.

The danger of the idea is that slower cars at the front could be crowded into first-lap accidents by the faster back-markers.

'Some of these suggestions come from people who don't engage their brains before opening their mouths,' a senior F1 designer sneered. 'They do little for companies who are attempting a serious job in what they believed was a serious sport.'

The WMSC should rubber-stamp the definitive '94 F1 technical regulations, which were agreed earlier in the year. These include bans on active suspension and traction control.

However, the proposed rule limiting a two-car team to 64 engine changes during the season will be shelved, along with restrictions on the number of mechanics allowed to work on cars during pit stops. **Alan Henry**

Today the world, tomorrow Britain

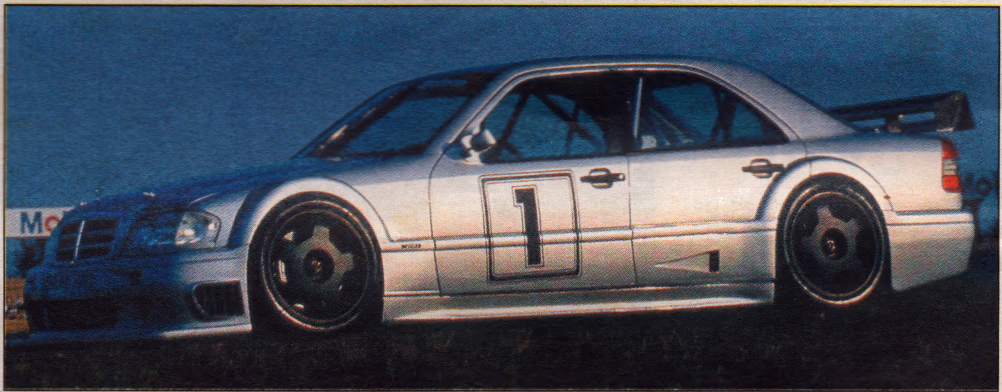
BY MARK FOGARTY

MERCEDES-BENZ won't be in British touring car racing next year, but it will be in Indycars and Formula One.

Plans for a factory-backed assault on the BTCC are close to being shelved until 1995 because Mercedes wants its motor sport arm, AMG, to concentrate on developing the new C-class model for German racing.

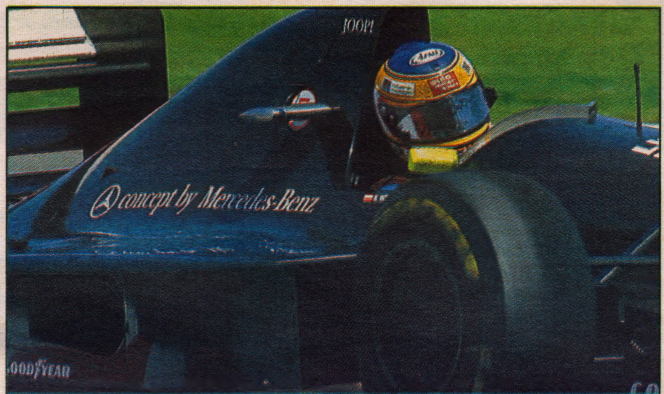
The Stuttgart company is also gearing up for an ambitious international motor sport programme aimed at restoring the tarnished image of the three-pointed star. Informed sources on both sides of the Atlantic say Mercedes-Benz will take over the naming rights of Ilmor's Indycar V8 and F1 V10.

Carweek has been told that the deal centres on Benz buying General Motors' 25 percent share of British-based Ilmor Engineering. This coincides with GM's recent decision to stop funding the Chevrolet-badged Ilmor Indy motor.



SUTTON PHOTOGRAPHIC

Developing Mercedes' Class 1 racer may mean that AMG will be too busy to work on a BTCC version



Three-pointed star will be on the V10 as well as the body next year

Strengthening speculation that Mercedes will join Ford and Honda in Indy racing is its corporate connection with Indycar czar Roger Penske, who is also a part-owner of Ilmor. Penske's Detroit Diesel and Mercedes-owned truck-maker, Freightliner, recently formed a venture company, and it is expected the Benz-badged Ilmor D V8 will power 1994's Penske Indycars.

As well as its Indy entry, Mercedes plans to boost its backing of the Swiss-based Sauber F1 team, extending its existing 'concept by Mercedes-Benz' promotional link to include engine identification and technical assistance.

The company has already confirmed that it will staying with Sauber. 'Where F1 is concerned, Peter Sauber has had a very close relationship with this company for many years and this will continue,' passenger car chief Jurgen Hubbert said.

Benz bosses see Indycars and F1 as high-technology showcases in the beleaguered luxury car-maker's main markets.

But, according to Mercedes-Benz UK insiders, the company's long-awaited – and widely predicted – entry into the BTCC is about to be put on hold until '95. Despite having sponsorship for a two-car team of Prodrive-prepared C200s, M-B UK has been told that AMG can't stretch to developing both German 2.5-litre and British 2.0-litre racing versions of the C-class.

But while M-B UK is resigned to not racing next year, Mercedes-Benz Motorsport maintains the project hasn't been cancelled.

'It's not impossible,' said spokesman Wolfgang Schattling. 'The Class 2 car hasn't been shelved yet. But our priority is Class 1 and taking into account how hard we have to work to get it onto the track in time, this doesn't leave us much time for anything else.'

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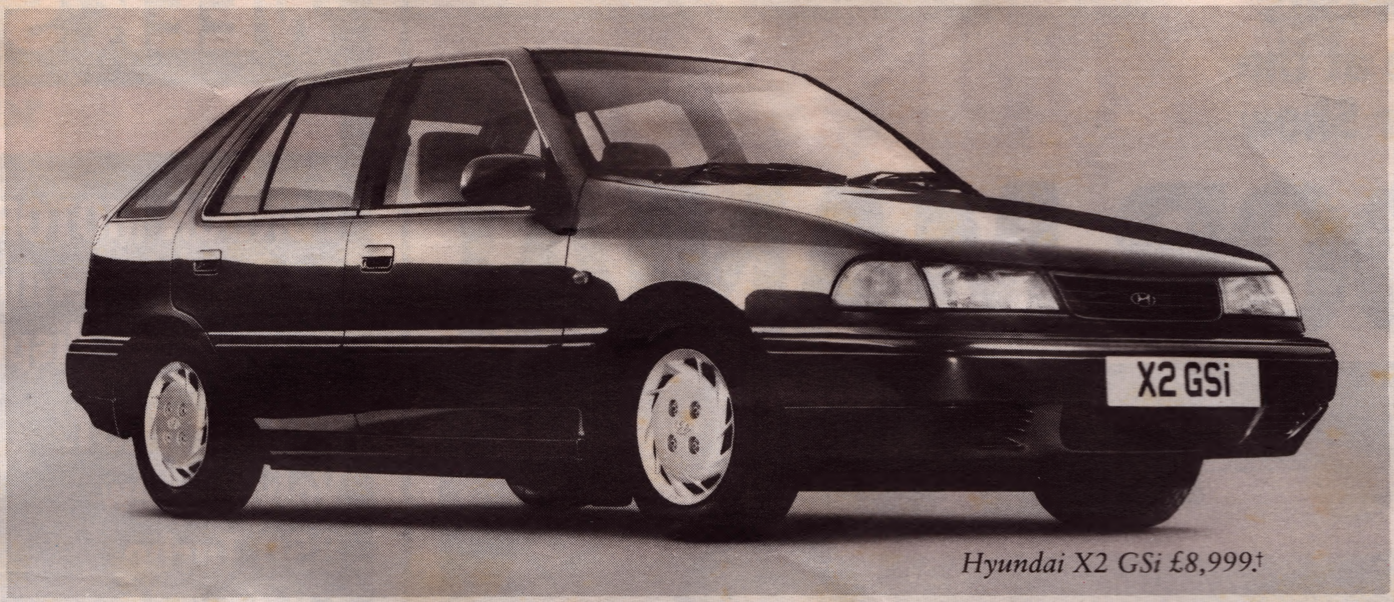

Hyundai X2 GSi £8,999.†

ALL FORD ESCORTS OFFER YOU A FULL RECOVERY SERVICE. PROBABLY TO HELP YOU GET OVER THE PRICE.

If you're on an economy drive, there really is only one car to drive. The Hyundai X2. Take our top of the range GSi model, featured above. It's priced at £8,999.† Whereas, the more basic Escort 1.3CFi 5 door costs £9,340.* But for £341 less, the X2 isn't short of features. It comes complete with a 4 speaker stereo cassette, central locking, electric windows, power steering and a 3 year unlimited mileage warranty (none of which the Escort has). While Hyundai don't put a high price on the car, we most certainly put a high price on your safety. This is why every X2 has side impact bars in the doors and front and rear anti-roll bars. As if all this isn't enough to make you want to buy an X2, we're offering 0% finance and special low repayment and low deposit schemes. If you'd like more information on the Hyundai X2 range, please call Freephone 0800 800 444. If however, you have already bought an Escort call your doctor. Maybe he can suggest something to help you get over the price.

HYUNDAI 1.3 SONNET FINANCE PLANS

PLANS	**Cash Price	Deposit	Balance	Flat rate	APR	Monthly Repayments	Total Repayable
0% APR	£6,962.41	£3,481.21	£3,481.20	0%	**0%**	12 x £290.10	£6,962.41
LOW MONTHLY PAYMENTS	£6,962.41	£3,133.09	£3,829.32	5.77%	**11.9%**	48 x £98.20	£7,898.69
LOW DEPOSIT	£6,962.41	£199.00	£6,763.41	7.50%	**14.9%**	48 x £183.18	£9,043.64

*Source: Autocar. ** Table illustration based on X2 3 door 1.3 Sonnet. Prices include delivery charge and number plates (£395.98 inc. VAT) and 6 months road fund licence (£67.50). No acceptance fee payable on 0% scheme, £52.00 fee for other schemes. †Prices exclude delivery charges, number plates and road fund licence. Prices and product details correct at time of going to press. Models subject to availability. Written quotations available on request. Finance offers only available through I.M.Finance Ltd., Ryder Street, West Bromwich, West Midlands B70 0EJ. Telephone 021 522 2000. Subject to credit acceptance. Applicants must be 18 years and over. A guarantor may be required. Offer applies to cars registered on or before 31 December 1993. Offer available to bona fide retail purchasers only. For further information call Hyundai Car (UK) Ltd on 021 522 2882. Separate motability schemes available. ♿ Motability approved.

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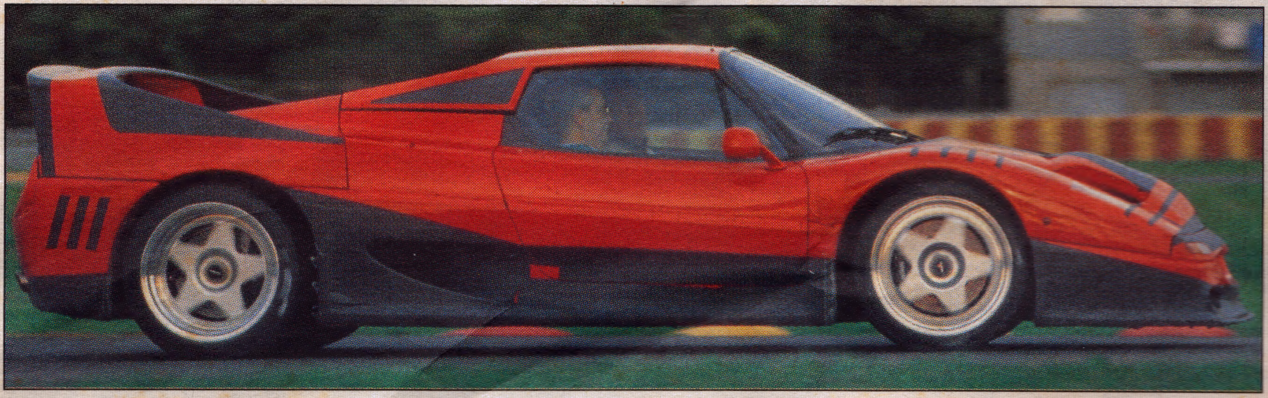
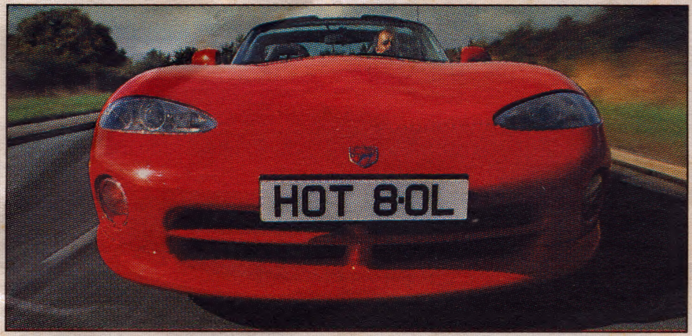
The great new cars you *won't* see at the London Motor Show

Carweek

SCOOP-MANIA!



Ferrari Barchetta (above) ■ Fiat Spider ■ Ford people carrier



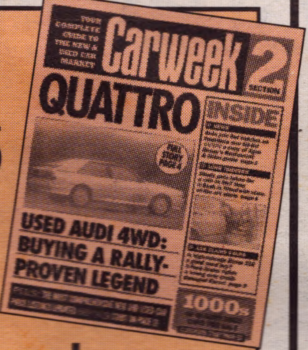
Full test of the Dodge Viper 8.0-litre thundercar now on sale in Britain

IN YOUR SECTION 2

AUDI QUATTRO Buying guide

PLUS

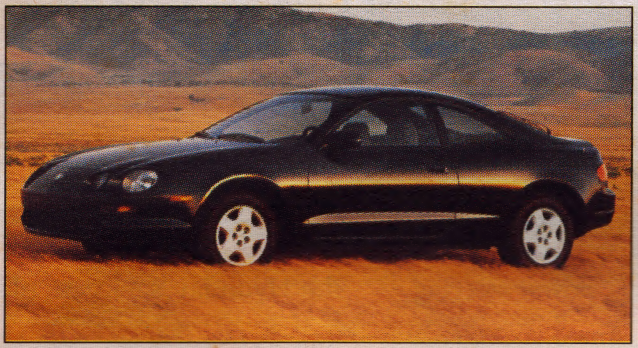
Britain's most up-to-date new and used car price listings



LAST CHANCE TO WIN AN £80,000 ASTON MARTIN DB7!

GROUP TEST Two Vauxhall Corsas take on Citroën AX 1.4 Echo D and Daihatsu Charade 1.3 GSe in a petrol-v-diesel shoot-out

FIRST DRIVE New Toyota Celica



GREAT GRAND PRIX DRIVERS

Carweek's Alan Henry writes a new series on the F1 legends

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FERRARI 456: Driving the 5.5-litre V12 that makes its London Show debut

PLUS: *WIN a day at the John Watson Performance Driving Centre at Silverstone*

IN YOUR FREE Carweek 2

INSURANCE BEATERS

Ten new and used cars that are fun to drive but won't bust your cover